

PARAGUAY ON SHANNON



F. HUGH O'DONNELL



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THE PRICE OF A POLITICAL PRIESTHOOD

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PARAGUAY ON SHANNON

THE PRICE OF A POLITICAL PRIESTHOOD

REMARKS ON POLICY AND PROCEED-
INGS OF A RIBBONMAN BOARD AND
A ROYAL ARRANGED COMMISSION

By

F. HUGH O'DONNELL, M.A.,

Author of "The Ruin of Education in Ireland," etc.

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NOTE.

THE province of Paraguay, in South America, became celebrated in the eighteenth century for the absolutist system of government established by the Jesuit fathers over the Indian tribes. The Jesuits are credited, however, with promoting the material prosperity of their servile subjects. No such extenuation can be urged on behalf of the political priesthood in Ireland. In Ireland material ruin has accompanied clerical despotism. The political priesthood have pauperised as well as demoralised. Their ascendancy has been almost synonymous with ignorance, indigence, inveracity, mendicancy, dishonesty, slavery, and sloth. What they did not steal they spoiled. They have traded on social revolution; they have sapped the bases of nationhood.

PARAGUAY ON SHANNON:

THE PRICE OF A POLITICAL PRIESTHOOD.

THE BOARD THAT FAILED.

“The Congested Districts Board has tried for twenty years to develop new industries, and has failed.”

Statement of Lord Dudley, Chairman of Congested Districts Commission.

“The Congested Districts Board, having been working for fourteen or fifteen years, have only touched the fringe of the question.”

Statement of Sir Antony MacDonnell, Under-Secretary; ex-Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, etc., etc.; member of Congested Districts Board and Commission.

DEPOPULATION UNDER THE BOARD, 1891—1901.

“Donegal lost 12,000 inhabitants; Sligo, 14,000; Kerry, 14,000; Mayo, 19,000; Galway, 23,000.”

Commission Reports, I., 227.

THE BOARD THE LAND LEAGUE LOVES.

“Speaking on behalf of the United Irish League, I tell the Commission that it is the strong view of the League that the Congested Districts Board should be preserved.”

Evidence of Mr. John FitzGibbon, delegate from the Central Council of the United Irish League.

WHY THE LAND LEAGUE LOVES THE BOARD.

“Take the constitution of the Board. Take Father Denis O’Hara and the Most Rev. Dr. O’Donnell. These two men in themselves, with the assistance they would get from men in the country, would in themselves be able to settle the entire question.”

Evidence of Mr. John FitzGibbon, as above.

INTRODUCTION.

A WHITE HOTTENTOT MISSION—CASTLE CLERICALISM — JACOBIN CLERGY — FISHERY REVIVED BY DUKE OF ABERCORN—BLACK-HOLE SCHOOLS AND RICH CATHEDRALS.

“I advise a boycott rigorous and complete.”

Mr. Conor O'Kelly, M.P., member of Commission.

“Join us in overthrowing the ascendancy of the classes.”

Most Rev. Bishop O'Donnell, member of Commission.

RELIGIOUS reasons or pretexts are intruded into most matters which have any relation to Ireland; and certain personages, who feel themselves set in unwelcome light, will be sure to accuse me of currying favour in some quarter by reprehensible accusations against the religious dogmas or the religious priests of my Church. Nothing can be more unfounded. I believe in that Church in every point, and accept her teaching from Nicæa to Trent, and from Trent to the Vatican. I revere the religious priests of Catholicism. I write exclusively against the domination of a political sacerdotalism, that perpetual curse of Christendom, nowhere more a curse than in Ireland, and never more a curse than now. The political priesthood sold the high kings to the Norman, and the Parliament to the Castle. Its nation-killing greed for pelf and power has become neither less sordid nor less hurtful since a misguided papacy,* following the

* By abolishing the ancient status and reducing the Irish Catholic Church to a “mission district” three-quarters of a century ago, the Pope placed Irish Catholics, priests and laymen, under the arbitrary absolutism of the Propaganda Congregation, just like Mongolia or Borneo. I shall make some detailed reference to this matter in the course of the following pages. Like a good Catholic, I recognise

inspiration of anti-Irish politicians, degraded the canonical Church of Catholic Ireland into a servile province of a Foreign Missions Board, and made the pious heirs of Patrick and Columba something like White Hottentots among the Catholic peoples of Europe.

The political priesthood can utilise the needs of the body almost as well as the aspirations of the soul. It can manipulate charity as adroitly as faith. While sincere and stainless ministers of religion shudder at the political desecration of the sanctuary, a score of petty Hildebrands parade with ostentation their profitable alliance with the mendaciousness of platforms and the trickery of Cabinets. The rude honesty of a popular tribune has voiced before now what many think, but few dare to utter. In the words of Mr. Michael Davitt :—“ A conscientious regard for religion, indeed ! No, it is not that. It is the eternal hungering after secular influence and temporal power, the assumption of authority to dictate to laymen what they shall think and do in the affairs of the nation.” The vast structure of ascendancy which the hierocrats

the validity of the revolution, and, like a good Catholic, I deplore it. Of course, I cannot explain to the Sacristy Parliamentarians and the Ribbon Lodges that a good Catholic can condemn the historical acts of popes ; but perhaps an illustration from those good Catholics, the reverend fathers of the Jesuit Society—so orthodox in dogma and so pernicious in politics—may help Sir Christopher Nixon or Baron Palles. In the well-known Jesuit periodical *The Month*, in its November issue, page 547, we can read the following condemnation of the Pope who started the great schism of the West, Urban VI. : “ It is clear from the documents that we have that the opposition cardinals would never have varied from their original choice had it not been that Urban VI. behaved, it must be acknowledged, simply like a lunatic, and made them fear for their lives and careers under his despotic rule.” Shall I say that the degradation of the ancient Church of the West to the class of coolie and negro missions was also a piece of “despotism” worthy of “a lunatic”? So meanly did the advisers of the Vatican estimate the religious priesthood of Ireland.

have been helped by politicians to erect on a basis of poor assistance is almost as notorious as their masterpiece, the organisation of ignorance. They are as supreme on the Board of Subsidies as on the Commission of Investigation, in the Relief Committee as in the Ribbon Lodge. Last century it used to be said of a certain Under-Secretary at Dublin Castle that Ireland was ruled "by Larcom and the police." To-day we say, "by Sir Antony and the blessed clergy."

Nor let us forget that the Irish political priesthood has come to be entirely convinced of the legitimacy of its usurpation, of the sanctity of its domination. Although a similar incubus has been shaken off by every Catholic nation of universal civilisation, by every Catholic land *that was determined not to die*, the priestly tyrants of Ireland not only teach to their starveling flocks the dogma of sacerdotal omnipotence, but they believe it themselves. Yet Irish Catholics could convince them of the immensity of their error but for that creature of sinister influence and example the accommodating Protestant. It is Dublin Castle which has fortified the political sacristy, the edifice of ill from which Ireland sees but two exits, the pauper graveyard and the emigrant quay. Both are congested districts, and the only ones in the country.

In other countries Catholic Churchmen are conservative of order and property. From end to end of the Continent they are nowhere to be found inciting "the toiling multitudes to overthrow the ascendancy of the classes," or proclaiming that landed estate is incompatible with human sympathies. In Ireland alone they are the firebrands of the populace; frustrating every reform by more and more exaggerated demands; glorying in intimidation; stimulating the boycott and the cattle-drive; applauding the repudiation of contracts; recruiting and directing lawless

confederations, excommunicate of Christendom, bound by secret passwords and sectarian oaths, ripe for outrage in the present, and sprung from a past red with ten thousand assassinations. Yet to such hands has English political faction abandoned the distribution of public bounties, the exercise of public authority, the development of national mendicancy, and the perpetuation of national decay.

The Congested Districts organisation, that misleading name, has been used to promote popular dependence upon the hierocrats and to envenom popular passions against the Irish gentry. "The landlords have never done anything for Ireland." That is the parrot-cry of half the pulpiteers. Considering that the incendiary clerics have been sowing hate between owners and occupiers for nearly a century, it may be acknowledged that they have often made impossible both benefits and co-operation. But thousands of Irish landlords exhausted their last shilling to feed their tenantry in the famine years, though their only reward from English political intelligence was to be the Encumbered Estates Acts. Even to-day the only great success of the Congested Districts Board, as claimed by itself, the boasted fishery in the Gweedore and Glenties district, owes its success in finding a market to an Irish landlord who, culmination of wickedness, is also a peer and a duke, assisted by a London fish merchant! I quote from the evidence before the Commission of Mr. J. F. O'Donnell, county councillor of Donegal, who bears this testimony to the immense benefit from this co-operation:—

"I am pleased to say that the fishmarket on the coast of the county has much improved for the past ten years, which is principally due to Mr. John L. Sayer, of London. In 1895 the price paid at Burtonport was very small. The following year His Grace the Duke of Abercorn visited the district. He witnessed not less than seventy boats lying at the Burtonport Pier, all having good catches, but no market for the fish. He immediately telegraphed to Mr. John L.

Sayer, of Billingsgate, London, requesting him to appoint a representative, who would take the fish from the boats, and have them forwarded without delay. Mr. Sayer took the matter up at once; sent his representative, Mr. John Guthrie, who went to work, and expended over £3,000 on the erection of fish-curing stations and kippering houses. Mr. Sayer then formed a company which is known as the Donegal Fishing Company. This company had nets working this year value for £2,000, boats value £5,000, stock value £3,000, and the amount of cash paid out by them for lobsters alone from 1st May to 30th September exceeds £900. The total amount of cash paid for fish, wages, and incidental expenses by this company in the last two and a half years is £27,360."

Is not this good work by an Irish landlord and an English merchant? Yet the clerics of the Congested Board want to rouse "the toiling masses" against such, and teach their ignorant people that "a landlord is incapable of human feeling." By the way, might not these reverend politicians reflect that, instead of £100,000 and £50,000 new cathedrals in distressed districts, spacious and seemly churches for God's service might be better built for £10,000 and £5,000, and the balance devoted to such work as that of the Duke of Abercorn and Mr. John L. Sayer, of London?

The same county councillor for Donegal gave testimony that, whereas the cartage of provisions by road from Londonderry used to cost the poor people of West Donegal an addition of £2 10s. per ton carriage,

"Mr. William Hammond, agent for the Marquis Conyngham in the Rosses, purchased, in the year 1887, a small steamer, which he ran between Londonderry and Killybegs, serving all the ports on the coast of the county of Donegal, resulting in a reduction of the carriage from £2 10s. to 10s. per ton."

Then the witness added the name of another Irish landlord to the foregoing:—

"Later on the late John Herdman, Deputy Lieutenant, came to Mr. Hammond's assistance, thus leaving us a regular sea service ever since."

A duke, a marquis's land agent, and a deputy lieutenant—here are three specimens in a single district in a single Irish county of that class "which never does anything for Ireland"; and yet they are incidentally mentioned by a single witness as being the means of earning and saving far more than £10,000 a year for the very people who are taught to curse them. I ought not to omit another piece of this witness's evidence upon the possibility of valuable reclamation of soil that is waste, and upon its actual reclamation, not by a board spending the money of the taxpayers, but by the private enterprise of a land agent. As I shall devote some space to the subject of Ireland's ample capacity to support a comfortable population, if only the element of enterprise and industry be forthcoming, I ask attention for this evidence in the present introduction:—

"The reclamation of moorland is a matter of great importance, as migration could be adopted, if even upon a small scale. Moorland drained, limed, and properly tilled gives good crops. In the townland of Cronashallog Mr. Hammond reclaimed a field of moorland of the rawest materials. I have known him to grow eighty tons of good potatoes in one year off this field, and a magnificent crop of oats the following year. . . . There are thousands of acres of this unreclaimed moorland within a distance of nine miles from here."

If, instead of the gospel of mendicancy, servility, and land robbery, the Jacobin clergy would preach industry, education, and honesty, Ireland, which is far more fertile than Belgium, would feed in comfort twice its population. It is not material, but moral, causes which are the curse of the country.

When we remember that the vital facts just quoted occurred in the most casual way in the evidence of a single witness, we can understand how complete would be the exculpation of thousands of the maligned class of Irish gentry, if the list of witnesses had not been carefully selected, "arranged for," in the interest of clerical demagogues and monopolisers. The Irish

gentry, their agricultural skill and enterprise, their considerable wealth, their intense patriotism and devotion to their native land, which only a fool or a knave would deny, their immense capacities for giving employment of every kind—all these qualities and qualifications make of them a magnificent asset of Ireland's wealth, material and intellectual. This is why English political genius wants them to take themselves and £150,000,000 of Irish capital out of the country, for investment in English enterprise perhaps, while their wretched ex-tenantry, loaded with debt, are left to the tender mercies of worthless demagogues, lay and clerical, during life, and legacy-hunting priests in the article of death.

But I have one word more to say in these prefatory notes, a word on drink and education in a congested district; and this will indicate some more of the moral factors ignored by the clerico-Jacobin charlatans. The scene is that district of Annagry, in the vicinity of Burtonport, where the Duke of Abercorn brought £10,000 yearly of London money to the fishermen of West Donegal. Here is a piece of evidence before the Congested Commission:—

SIR JOHN COLOMB—How many public-houses are there in Annagry?

VERY REV. MGR. WALKER—Five, I suppose.

SIR JOHN COLOMB—I asked yesterday, and I was told there were eleven.

VERY REV. MGR. WALKER—There are not so many. There are four there right at the bridge.

Four, five, or eleven, there are enough public-houses for a population of 3,000 semi-paupers, as they are said to be. Of the neighbouring island of Arranmore, containing 1,400 semi-paupers, we get the following compendium of the drink facilities:—

SIR JOHN COLOMB—Are there any licensed houses in Arranmore?

VERY REV. MGR. WALKER—There are a number.

SIR JOHN COLOMB—Can you offer any idea of how many there are?

VERY REV. MGR. WALKER—I am almost ashamed to tell you there are seven.

SIR JOHN COLOMB—Then on Arran Island there was no doctor and seven public-houses?

VERY REV. MGR. WALKER—Yes, that is it, and no nurse.

It will be admitted that drink facilities were ample, notwithstanding that “influence for good” exercised by the clergy over their flocks. Let us see what were the education facilities. Mr. Walker, an industrial inspector and adviser under the Board, will give us an Annagry specimen. Mr. Walker will later speak of lacemaking under the Board and in the ordinary schools. Lace is an ill-paid embellishment of the rich, often exacted from the starvation, blindness, and tuberculosis of the poor, which drives the wretched work-girl out of Ireland to risk all in the slums of New York. It is a favourite specialty of convent factories.

SIR ANTONY MACDONNELL—I understood Mr. Sutherland to say that the schools that he saw were inadequate to the average attendance. When the average attendance is exceeded, what becomes of the children?

MR. WALKER—They are simply crowded.

SIR A. MACDONNELL—Is not that insanitary?

MR. WALKER—The sanitary condition of a great number of these schools is very bad. I have been in a school in Annagry 13 ft. 3 in. by 23 ft. 6 in., *and there were eighty children there.*

SIR A. MACDONNELL—How many?

MR. WALKER—Eighty.

SIR A. MACDONNELL—And one may expect that children like that will carry away the seeds of disease?

MR. WALKER—Yes; and then there was a rough floor, and you could hardly say which was the roof and which was the wall.

The Commissioners, some of them, were horrified at this awful state of affairs, and further questions ensued:—

MR. BRYCE—For eighty children, that is four and a half square feet per child. Is there any regulation in Ireland with regard to the space provided for each child in a national school?

MR. WALKER—Yes.

MR. BRYCE—What is the regulation in Ireland with regard to the square foot space per child?

MR. WALKER—I am not quite sure.

SIR JOHN COLOMB—I think it is ten square feet.

SIR A. MACDONNELL—There is no definite space in Ireland.

All these “national schools,” be it not forgotten, are priest-managed; and neither Sir Antony MacDonnell nor any other representative of Dublin Castle will ever venture to insist upon “floor space” or breathing space for the children blessed by such celestial administration. What does the reader think of drink and education facilities in a congested district of the Congested Board, sanctified by all the moral influence of a political priesthood since generations and generations?

And this inspector and adviser appointed by the Board, paid by the taxpayer, “is not quite sure” what space to stand and breathe is required or requirable for the poor little children who are to be the future men and women of Ireland. Do we wonder at everybody trying to emigrate from such a country? Again a bit of evidence:—

MR. SUTHERLAND—But the people go out of the country that you are at the expense of training?

MR. WALKER—You cannot prevent it.

So the taxpayer is paying the Congested Districts Board, its favourites, nominees, and inspectors, for that net result.

The results of the Congested Board mentality are amazing. On the one hand, there is that miserable hovelful of stunted school children, stifling in their four and a half square feet of floor space, eighty Irish Catholic children, we are told. On the other hand, while those piteous youngsters were sickening in that stenchful air, there was being built, “for the greater glory of God,” a vast and lavish new cathedral in the petty townlet of Letterkenny, costing scores of thousands of pounds, surrounded by other architectural exhibitions of the clerical spirit, all erected on the very borders of extreme congestion, for whose

relief the collecting tambourine was being rattled at all ears of the taxpaying public ; but not a single thousand pound note was divertible from all that stone and mortar, and stained glass, and statuary, for the children's dens of Annagry and scores of other seats of moral management in faithful Donegal ! This, I believe, is what is known in clerical Parliamentaryism as "guarding the souls of Ireland's youth."

Nor is it the clerical mentality alone which is amazing in the congested districts. The laity whom those clerics have trained for generations are not unworthy of their spiritual guides. Always ready to receive, they will do absolutely nothing themselves for the common good. Applications were made to the Commissioners at Burtonport for public funds to start a couple of young coopers in what was described as a certain occasion of profit. "Only £30 would suffice," it was pleaded. But the Commissioners were beginning to know their men ; and Sir John Colomb put this question to a pleader, which goes to the bottom of the cadging, unhelpful, uncivic frame of soul developed by the mendicancy of the congestion policy :—

SIR JOHN COLOMB—Do you mean to say that in a district like this, *with something like £10,000 a year coming in for fish*—do you mean to say that, though that much money is coming in here, *£30 cannot be raised to start a paying business* that would employ these young coopers ?

And do not those well-trained congesters understand how to make the taxpayer pay for the lands required for the enlargement of uneconomic holdings ? They have profited by nearly twenty years of the Congested Board and its taxpaid beneficence. Here is an answer which a Commissioner got from the Marquis of Conyngham's agent as to the legitimate expectations of those intelligent persons :—

SIR JOHN COLOMB—I want to know the initial expense the Congested Board would have to face if they made up their mind to acquire that land for the purpose of enlarging adjoining holdings.

MR. POMEROY — *It would have to be fifty or sixty years purchase, no doubt.*

Decidedly the peasant disciples of the Congested Board do not favour confiscation as applied to themselves. They may be said to appreciate fully the value of individual ownership.*

Still, perhaps, the most shocking illustration of the mentality which has been engendered in Donegal and similar districts is the juxtaposition of such school-dens as the "Black Holes" of Annagry; the Burtonport fishing community, which does nothing for the children, though it has gained probably £100,000 by the improved market initiated by the Duke of Abercorn in 1895; and that Letterkenny new cathedral which has absorbed £100,000 in stone and decoration, while the children of Donegal have those dens for school-houses!

But enough in the way of preface. More complete details must be left to the body of the book.

F. HUGH O'DONNELL.

* A very amusing instance of a Donegal priest's appreciation in his own case of the value of ownership came before the Commissioners. Colonel Irvine, one of the land agents who are denounced so furiously for declining to sell land at prairie value, gave this specimen of the prairie value set upon his own land by one of the most magnificent of the clerical advocates of a short way with the landlords:—

COLONEL IRVINE — There is one holding I would like to draw attention to. It consists of four acres; the rent was 15s. 9d. There were no improvements whatever, and it was sold for £115 to a tenant by the Rev. Mr. McFadden himself—*that is, for one hundred and forty-six years' purchase!!!*

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PART I.

THE COOKING OF EVIDENCE AND THE COOKING OF COMMISSIONS.



“When I appeared before the Commissioners I was struck by their ability in avoiding to ask me any question that would help to get out what they knew I had to say, but there was no lack of bullying cross-examination to discredit me.”

Testimony of Mr. P. Kenny, author of “Economics for Irishmen”; witness before the Commission.

VOICES FROM CONGESTIA.

“I do not care what the results may be ; I advise a boycott rigorous and complete.”

Speech of Mr. Conor O’Kelly, M.P., member of the Commission.

“The fact of a man becoming a landlord makes him heartless.”

Evidence of Father O’Hara, member of Congestion Board.

“The toiling masses of Great Britain have good reasons of their own to join us in overthrowing the ascendancy of the classes.”

Manifesto of Bishop O’Donnell, member of the Commission and the Board ; Treasurer of League Parliamentary Fund.

WHY I TENDERED EVIDENCE BEFORE THE COMMISSION.

“Royal Commissions sit, at Ireland’s expense, not daring to ask for the truth of witnesses who dare not tell it. . . . The Royal Commission on Congestion illustrates the thing well.”

The Author of “The Sorrows of Ireland.”

THE reason why I tendered evidence before the Royal Commission which purported to inquire into the working of the Congested Districts Board in Ireland can be told very simply. I knew from personal observation and much well-informed testimony that an influential section of the so-called Congested Districts Board has been working for many years in conscious or unconscious collusion with the clerico-Jacobin party in Ireland for the purpose of exciting agrarian discontent and promoting a movement for the confiscation of property. I had the proofs that the Royal Commission of Inquiry had been so constituted as not to inquire into the real sources of the poverty which exists, and especially not to inquire into the policy of the so-called Congested Board. I more than suspected that any attempt to present independent evidence would be resisted with all the resources of chicane habitual to the managers of these matters at Dublin Castle, and I wished to acquire the certainty that there would be special objection to the evidence of a man accustomed to treat public questions, a trained writer on political and economic subjects, a former member of Parliament, and lifelong member of the Irish Nationalist party. Things turned out to be exactly as I was led to anticipate. The Royal Commission of Inquiry included as its most prominent and influential member the most

prominent and influential member of the very Board into which it was supposed to inquire; and alongside of him was an open advocate and agent as well as several less avowed supporters of the compulsory expropriation of the Irish landlord class. There was the usual fringe of impartial and impressionable members, whose judgment would be mainly affected by the evidence brought before them, and who were accordingly more or less at the mercy of the selectors of the evidence that was permitted to reach the Commission. There was in addition, of course, a certain number of official members, who, as in the case of the Chief Secretary and Under-Secretary and ex-Lord Lieutenant, were entirely dependent on the evidence supplied to them, as they had little or no practical experience of Ireland outside of their official functions. It was accordingly apparent that the selection of evidence was calculated to be the decisive factor, in an especial degree for the impartial and impressionable outsiders who had been appended to the Church party and the Castle party, and were consequently to be protected as much as possible from all evidence likely to contradict the clerico-official theories. In this way there was a pleasing probability that the verdict of the whole Commission would be practically unanimous in support of the pre-established arrangements. As more than one of the official members was understood to be on the best of terms with the clerico-Jacobin party, and as independent members of the non-official laity had been almost excluded from the Royal Commission, the conspirators, or shall we say the coadjutors, ought to be able to look forward with some confidence to a foregone conclusion.

Immediately on the early sittings of the Commission enabling me to recognise the nature of the tactics which had been adopted, and the plans of the personages who had been appointed, I resolved to apply

for admission as a witness, in the safe and certain expectation that I should not be allowed to prove an exception to the rule against independent testimony.

Having the fear of the law of libel as well as the great commandment of charity before my eyes, I bring no charge of evil intentions or conscious dishonesty against the most dependent and prejudiced witnesses, Commissioners, or Board members. The worst servants of the public are often men who mean well according to their lights, but whose ideas and training render them the instruments of designs fatal to the State and nation. A prairie rent bishop; a Parliamentary Ribbonman; a monk who believes that, for their souls' sake, men cannot be too poor nor the Church too rich; the eminent ecclesiastic who predicted to me in 1890, "Within ten years the Church will be supreme in Ireland"; all these fanatics can be allowed to be honest to the core. But they make bad administrators, bad witnesses, bad judges in matters of general civic right and secular property and well-being. The Congested Fiction Board has been a vast organisation of political corruption, of agrarian socialism, of national pauperisation, of priestly favouritism, of financial waste, of sham philanthropy, of mental and moral demoralisation. The Congested Fiction Commission is its whitewashing machine. Let us assume all the good intentions in the world. I condemn not individuals, but the system.

It was the packing of the Royal University Commission five years ago which first directed my attention seriously to the manner in which Royal Commissions are used and abused at Dublin Castle. Of course, I was not without a suspicion that the dice were oftentimes cogged and the cards sometimes prearranged—that is part of the experience of all public men in Ireland—but I had not been called upon to investigate the matter with any particular care or closeness of examination. Fuller enlightenment only came when

I saw that on the Royal University Commission there had been secured a sufficient number of places to the nominees of clerical monopoly; that representative authorities on the side of unmuzzled education were conspicuous by their absence; that, in addition to the official spokesmen of clericalism, there was a number of impressionable gentlemen who might be trusted to go quite as far as politeness suggested with their pious colleagues; and that the remainder of the Commission was made up of men of high character indeed, of much learning indeed, but who, coming from England and Scotland, were imperfectly acquainted with the realities of the educational situation in Ireland, and were left to the guidance of their skilful coadjutors.

It was when I realised these facts that I was led to give to that Commission the critical care and attention which resulted in my book upon the subject.

There can be no doubt that when a Commission is astutely selected, or packed with even a few able adherents of one side, and when the other side is carefully deprived of efficient representation, it is no safeguard whatever to fill the remaining seats upon the Commission with men of even the highest distinction, who are dependent upon the selected evidence which will be placed before them for the whole of their knowledge on the subject. The selection of a trustworthy Nucleus, pledged to one particular line of thought and action, necessarily carries with it the power of selecting the evidence in the manner most advantageous to the views of the dominant party. When I heard that a similar practice would be followed in the case of the inquiry into the congested districts, I resolved that some steps should be taken to bring the arrangement to a test.

And what makes all this caballing and manœuvring, this corruption and this cant, this mendicancy and this mendacity, at once so loathsome and so ludicrous,

is the miserable farce and failure of it all. The Congested Districts Board fills up its record of waste and pretence "in order to check depopulation"! And all the while the population is rushing faster than ever out of the country.

I take the following paragraph from the Dublin correspondence of a semi-religious newspaper largely supported by Irish priests and people. The continued progress of depopulation, the total failure of the Congested Fiction Board to stop it in the slightest degree, are writ large in this communication:—

THE TIDE OF EMIGRATION.

The Under-Secretary for Ireland, who embarked at Queenstown on Friday for America, where he is to spend a brief holiday, was an interested spectator of sad scenes as hundreds of young Irish men and women who were about to travel by the steamer bade sorrowful farewell to their relatives who had come to see them off. Notwithstanding the efforts of many to check it, the tide of emigration keeps swelling ever, and this year's drain will undoubtedly be larger than last year's. For the nine months that have already elapsed a considerable increase has taken place in the number of emigrants as compared with the corresponding period of last year, the figures being 51,598 and 43,394 respectively, a sad commentary on the way in which Ireland is ruled.

Of course the concluding lament of the clerical journal on the results of "the way in which Ireland is ruled" is not intended to convey any reflection upon the rule of the political priest. Give still more money and still more power to the political priest, and the Congested Fiction Board will continue to flourish, and the population will continue to disappear.

THE COMMISSION'S HOSTILITY TO UNSELECTED EVIDENCE.

THE BROKEN PROMISE—LEAGUE EVIDENCE PREFERRED—
I TAKE WARNING.

DURING the last months of 1906 I wrote several letters to the Secretary of the Commission* expressing my desire to give evidence, especially as I was personally acquainted with the policy of the Home Rule party in the seventies and eighties with regard to what is called Congestion in Ireland. I added that I had carefully studied the working of the Board since its foundation; and that my experience of allied questions on the Continent had, I thought, enabled me to get nearer the bottom of the Irish distress problem. I have not all the replies of the Secretary at this period under my hands; but I distinctly recollect that I was informed that the Commission discountenanced volunteer evidence, and was indisposed to hear any witnesses not invited by itself. I was not told who performed the function of selection, but from many other sources I had no personal doubt that the evidence, like the Commission, had been arranged by the parties in Dublin Castle favourable to the extension of what is called the relief of congestion at the expense of the public purse, but under the direction of the political clergy. Notwithstanding the secretarial cautions, I find I have a letter, dated the 16th November, 1907, in which the Secretary "acknowledges receipt of your letter of the 14th

* Wherever "Commission," "Board," or "Evidence" is mentioned, it will refer, unless otherwise stated, to the "Congested Districts" respectively.

instant," which he would submit to the Commission, and already warning me that "the list of witnesses is already very full, but it might be possible to take you in London in February next. In any case it will be necessary for you to send me a precis of the evidence which you propose to offer, for the information of the Commission, so that they can judge whether it will be necessary to call you."

I have five letters from the Secretary of the Commission at various dates between the 7th January and the 25th March, 1907, which are eloquent both of my persistence in forcing independent testimony upon the reluctant Inquiry, and of the fixed purpose of the Inquiry to avoid or evade the independent evidence. Thus on the 7th January I received this discouraging message, which was a complete programme of hostility :—

It is not easy to say when you can be examined, as each day of the sittings, which are to be held in London from the 14th to the 23rd day of February and 12th to the 23rd day of March, seems to be fully occupied, and as it is not the present intention of the Commission to hold any other sittings, except in the congested districts for the reception of local evidence.

I wrote again repeating the expression of my desire to give evidence, and not concealing what I called my surprise at the reluctance of the Commission to hear any evidence which had not been selected by the selectors. On the 15th February, that is five weeks after the previous official communication, I received the following reply from the Secretary, confirming the reluctance of the Commission to listen, even when they were sitting in London, to the evidence of a would-be witness in London whose name had not been selected, "arranged for" as far back as the November of the previous year! Here are the exact words of the renewed declaration of evasion :—

The Commission only met yesterday, and will not meet in private, for the purpose of considering, *inter alia*, your desire

to give evidence, until next week ; therefore it is impossible to give you any further reply at present. I have circulated your memorandum of evidence amongst the Commissioners. You will remember, as I have already told you, that the witnesses to be heard during February and March were arranged for as long ago as last November ; and therefore the only chance of the Commission being able to take you now is if some of the witnesses prove shorter than was originally expected.

I remember that I wrote a very strong protest in reply to this obstinate attitude of evasion and avoidance, and informed the Commission, in fairly forcible terms, that I would take steps to publish my evidence with a preface narrating their proceedings in the matter. I got at length the following definite promise on the 23rd February, 1907, that the Commission would call me as witness *on their next visit to London during the month of March* :—

I submitted your request to the Commission at their private meeting yesterday, and they have directed me to inform you that they will be pleased to take your evidence during their March sittings in London. I cannot tell you the exact date at present, but it will be some time about Monday, the 25th March.

The promise of the Commission proved to be no guarantee whatever against their settled policy of dislike to independent testimony. It was in fact a misleading misstatement. The March sitting of the Commission in London took place ; and it had nearly come to an end, without the promised hearing of my evidence, when, in reply to my telegram of inquiry, I received the following formal statement that the promise was not intended to be kept :—

The Commission have just been considering the possibility of hearing all the witnesses whom it was arranged to take during the present sittings. Owing to the unexpectedly long time taken examining the representatives of the Irish Landowners' Convention and the United Irish League, all the arrangements have been upset. The Commission have extended their sittings up till Thursday night. Owing to the fact of the next day being Good Friday, and to the Easter holidays coming on, it is

impossible further to extend the present session. Therefore the Commission have been forced, much to their regret, to postpone to a subsequent date some witnesses whose evidence it was hoped to take this week. The Chairman desires me to express his regret at having to postpone the taking of your evidence, and to say that you will be heard either in London or Dublin before the Commission conclude their deliberations. It does not seem possible at present to give any indication of the date, as during the next few months the Commission will be sitting in the congested districts for the purpose of hearing local evidence and making local investigations. I shall, of course, communicate with you as soon as anything can be settled.

In this manner, after some five months of persistent tender of my testimony, and in spite of the tardy promise to receive it, the Commission of Inquiry had most courteously found means, really for the second time, of evading their engagement, and of continuing their hostility to independent witnesses. The information now afforded me, that my place had been taken by "witnesses from the United Irish League," was at once droll and unblushing. The Commission would, of course, hear League witnesses by the dozen and the score in Ireland, every one selected—"arranged for"—to support the League demand for the increased distribution of public money among the League adherents, and for the compulsory expropriation of all landlords who declined to part with their estates upon the League terms. The allegation of any need of substituting League for independent testimony in London was in these circumstances distinctly humorous. As for the further information that the Commission or its managers would not receive my testimony in any event *until after it had completed the taking of local evidence in Ireland*, that was precisely what I knew to be the policy, though I had not quite expected such an ingenuous avowal by the Board.

But I had wanted specially to be called *before the Board commenced its local investigations*, as one of the

special reasons which made me so persistent in my application was the desire to supply the less partisan members of the Commission with indications which might open their eyes to the real state of affairs in the local districts before they should come to hear the selected evidence of local witnesses. It was clear that the managers of the Commission suspected that some such intention was mine; and, in order to preserve the non-partisan members of the Commission from unofficial illumination of a disturbing character, the illumination was to be postponed *until too late to throw any light whatever* upon the selected suggestions of local testimony.

As I was bound to leave Europe at the end of the month, and as I had met with nothing but hostility and evasion during my applications to the Commission over a period of five or six months; as, furthermore, I was now satisfied that I might be met with bullying and insult, I informed the courteous Secretary that I would lay my evidence before the public instead, in order to save my views from being burked or vilified by the managers of the comedy.

THE CONGESTED BOARD AND INDEPENDENT EVIDENCE.

THE FATE OF A WITNESS—THE PRIESTS AND MIGRATION
—THE SPECIFIC INSTANCE—THE WRATH OF A
COMMISSIONER.

THE treatment which was meted out to me also came within the experience of another member of the independent lay public, who had quixotically assumed that it was his right, as an Irishman of culture and experience, to give evidence on public questions of deep importance before what purported to be a public board for the investigation of facts. Mr. P. Kenny is well known under the signature of "Pat" as a most able and carefully informed writer on the Irish situation. The series of articles which he recently contributed to the *Saturday Review* were followed by a large circle of readers with deep attention; and it is well known that Ministers and ex-Ministers of the Crown have perused with marked attention his revelations. His previous work "Economics for Irishmen" was a most luminous survey of the deplorable condition of affairs in Ireland, coupled with the most fearless criticism of the worst causes of the evil which has been published in recent times; and its statements have been studied by thinking men who take an interest in Ireland not only within these kingdoms, but in America and Australia. If the Congested Districts Commission had been much else than a shield for clerical extortion and domination, and, as I call it, a Royal Ribbon Commission, the evidence of such a skilled authority on the questions at issue would have been invited from the very outset of any

investigation which was intended to be an investigation, and not a deception.

Of course, however, as could be foreseen by all who know the unscrupulous meannesses which govern the Anglo-Roman Concordat faction at Dublin Castle, this distinguished Irishman found his proffer of testimony received with the utmost hostility; and it was only his threat to make the public acquainted with the coyness of this curious Commission which at length forced the "arrangers of evidence" to admit him, at least nominally, as a witness before them. Here are his own words, as written by him to the *Standard* newspaper of London, narrating both the resistance of the Commission to hearing him at all, and their tardy and apparent submission before his threat of appeal to the public:—

Many of my readers and friends had pressed me to give evidence, and I waited a long time, preferring that somebody else gave the facts I meant to give; but no one else gave these facts, and when at length I offered them there was great uneasiness, which developed into alarm when, after they had definitely refused to hear me, I persisted in giving them through the Press if they persisted in refusing.

One of the most significant features of the general failure of the Congested Districts Board is the difficulty, said to amount to an impossibility, of inducing the inhabitants of even the most miserable townlands to shift, or to allow themselves to be shifted, to better quarters at a distance. As I shall further indicate, very little of this congested misery, which is so loudly advertised, would exist in Ireland if the people, who can labour and do not, could be got to go where there is work to be done and nobody to do it. On the criminally under-cultivated lands of the Irish farmers—leaving the Irish landlords out of the question altogether—there is work for hundreds of thousands of additional labourers, supposing of course that the Irish farmers will begin to cultivate their land up to

its capacity. Without waiting for the farmers, the Congested Districts Board is offering to buy land, and to supply good holdings to all sorts of miserable peasants; and professes to be immensely surprised and pained at the refusal of the peasants to quit their misery for a fresh start on good soil and under favourable conditions. What can be the reason? Now everybody who knows what is going on in Ireland knows that the priests are at the bottom of the reluctance of the congested district population to migrate to better farms. The priests in the congested districts are making a golden profit out of their possession of a tract of congested peasants. The golden rain of the Congested Board falls upon the parishes which can show plenty of dirt and misery; and the golden rain has sometimes a trick of enriching the faithful pastors even when leaving the faithful people as they were. Like those Italian *padroni* who make an income out of the exhibition of starving children begging in the streets of London, the Irish *padres*—that is to say, the non-religious section of them—cherish the misery of their flock as the surest signpost for the benefactions of the Board.

The author of "Economics for Irishmen," knowing these circumstances as an economist should, made bold to tell the facts to the Commission at Castlebar. He was at once met with an indignant demand from the Church Militant on the Board to produce a specific instance of the abuse. It is notoriously difficult to produce specific instances of the misconduct of Irish priests towards Irish flocks. In the present state of law and order in Ireland the flock is much too prudent, for good reasons, to bear evidence against the pastor. Any inquirer who wants evidence against the Irish clergy can get more of it than he can use *on condition that he does not quote his informant*; but as informations without informants are rightly scouted by royal commissions of inquiry, or non-inquiry, you see there is a

difficulty. And so Mr. Kenny was to find the question, "Where is your specific instance?" thundered at him by righteously indignant Commissioners. "Give us a specific instance." Here is his experience:—

When I appeared before the Commissioners at Castlebar, I was struck with their ability in avoiding to ask me any question that would help to get out what they knew I had to say; but there was no lack of bullying cross-examination to discredit me, and the Bishop kept this up until it brought himself down to the level of attributing bad motives to me, when I promptly stopped his Lordship. . . .

There was something like consternation when, a few days later, I followed them to Swinford with the "specific instance" which his Lordship was so anxious to have. They would hear me "if there was time after all the others had been heard," quite in the manner of their London negotiating; but that was not enough for me, and I sent another ultimatum, whereupon they again decided to listen to the truth as the least of their evils. The remarkable document that follows was not part of my evidence, but volunteered to me to support it at Swinford, after the Bishop had led in discrediting it at Castlebar:—

"On the estate of Lady Larpent, at Waterdale, in the parish of Clare Galway, the Waterdale tenants are some of the poorest and most highly rented I have known. When I was preparing this estate for sale the parish priest, Father Commons, stated to me that he was opposed to the Congested Districts Board having anything to do with the purchase of this estate, and that he would not consent to the migration of any of his parishioners.

(Signed) E. S. JORDAN.

Kiltimagh, August 31st, 1907."

It would be droll, if it were not detestable, all this fencing against facts and the effort of a commission of inquiry to dodge the results of inquiry. What was especially annoying to the rulers of the Commission was, that the witness who supplied this specific instance is a man of acknowledged position and character, actually engaged in Government service. The idea of a Government servant letting in the light upon political priests who are the special partners of Dublin Castle appeared to members of the Commission to be little short of impiety. The hostility of the political pastors, who benefit by the grants of the Congested Board, to the migration of the poor creatures

who draw those benefactions to the "Parish Committee," was finally reflected in the further proceedings of the Board towards Mr. Kenny. Members of the Commission accused him of un-Irish conduct, denounced him to the mob, impugned his motives, and might have endangered his life. But let him speak for himself:—

The consternation was succeeded by rage, and one of the Commissioners made speeches from the bench to the mob against me, repeating the untruth that "on a certain occasion" I had alleged perjury against "my fellow-countrymin." . . .

The facts in my evidence are common knowledge, however innocent of them the Bishop may be; they are vouched by the Board's own officials from direct experience; yet I am the only man in Ireland who dares to present them and to show how the clergy make the Congested Districts Board useless to the purpose for which it was chartered and financed, so complete is the moral terror that makes it impossible for the people to benefit by things done for them.

THREATS OF VIOLENCE TO THE WITNESS.

Of course no members of the Commission would participate in the next phase of the movement got up against the independent witness. But when he had been denounced to the ignorant and dependent mob, full of the old Ribbon taint which had infected so many generations of Irish history, when he had been described as an insulter of his countrymen, who would take the bread of the Congested Board out of their mouths into the bargain, the result was natural. *Personal danger was in the air.* In the words of Mr. Kenny:—

Now they say I am to be murdered, and I have had several warnings. If I must be murdered, I should rather have it due to a bishop than to a priest, and I hope that the Most Rev. Dr. O'Donnell, with his irrelevant story about perjury, will examine his conscience in relation to the matter in accordance with the moral obligations of which he is a distinguished exponent. The threats may be merely to frighten me out of Ireland, but I am not going. We have quite enough Irishmen who dare say what they think only outside their own

country, and let us have at least one inside. If I must die, it will be with the knowledge that I have done work for Ireland which cannot be murdered.

So now the public who read these pages have before them two examples of how this Commission of Inquiry received independent evidence. When I found that time after time the Commission had broken its engagement to hear me, on one pretext after another, I felt that I might only expose myself to contumely and insult, if I persisted in forcing my knowledge of what was in the course of transaction upon inquirers who wanted to ignore it altogether. The author of "Economics for Irishmen" found himself opposed by similar chicane and procrastination, and, with less love for his personal comfort than animated me, persisted in forcing the unwelcome truth upon those strange investigators, but drew upon himself all that I foresaw would be the result of any obstinate effort at enlightening the voluntary blind and deaf: irrelevant questioning; dodging the issue; demands for confirmation, which was known to be difficult; misrepresentation and denunciation when the undesirable confirmation was forthcoming; and then the threats of personal violence from the besotted creatures who have been taught to defend every stronghold of the political priesthood as the veritable sanctuary of God.

How does the reader like the working of these arrangements between the clerical politicians and the political clergy? I shall make further use of the experience of this able and independent writer in support of my own testimony. There are scores of other Irishmen of position and education whom the Commission ought to have called, whom it did not call, and who, if they had forced themselves on the unwilling attention of the Black Band which controls investigation and reform in Ireland, would have been subject to similar hostility and intimidation. For

many years past a most dangerous class of what may be called blackmail mendicants has been fostered by the rulers of the Congested Board, and the misappropriation of the money and influence of the system has become too valued a spoil of the malefactors to be surrendered without a desperate resistance.

It cannot be noted too seriously that the long connection of the political priesthood in Ireland with dishonesty and crime has produced grave results for religion and its observances among increasing sections of the population. Men guilty of atrocious acts will exhibit an intense devotion, and at once manifest their regard for the Church and their contempt for its commandments. James Carey, the arch-assassin and arch-traitor of the Phoenix Park murders, was a habitual communicant in his parish place of worship. It is on church doors and at church gates that the most cruel edicts of the boycott are proclaimed. I know a member of the party in Parliament who chose after Mass and outside the village chapel to lead a gang of fellow-scoundrels to pelt with mud and stones the wife and daughters of a boycotted farmer. For this cowardly crime he received two months' imprisonment, and was immediately elected to Parliament on coming out of gaol. Yet he had attended the Divine Office along with his victims! Such habits must end in total irreligion, which will be more honest at least. The political priest is undermining all religious belief. There is less reason to wonder that three Irishmen out of five who land in America drop the faith of their fathers. The seed of that apostacy was sown by the political sacristy.

OFFICIAL JACOBINISM.

It is quite notorious in Ireland that all owners of landed property regard with the gravest suspicion both the Estates Commissioners and the Congested Board. Both are believed to work in the interest of an agrarian Jacobinism, conducted by lay and clerical agitators. Mr. St. George Robinson, member of one of the oldest firms of land agents, openly declared to the Congestion Commission :—

In no instance should the fixing of the price of estates be left in the hands either of the Estates Commissioners or the Congested Districts Board.

Mr. Robinson added that the rumours of confiscation or compulsory sale which accompanied the creation of the Congestion Commission itself had revived violent agitation throughout the country.

The tenants told me in plain English they were going to get the land by compulsion, and going to force our hands. . . . It was one of the quietest districts in the country up to the appointment of the Commission, but now it is very much disturbed.

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMISSION ?

Lord Dudley, the Chairman of the Commission, seems desirous of championing projects in Ireland which he might dislike to see realised on the Dudley estates in England. I quote from the *Freeman's Journal's* account of the Connemara visit of the Commission :—

MRS. BLAKE, of Renvyle, was examined, and presented a number of figures to show that the officially-supplied list of non-resident graziers was incorrect.

LORD DUDLEY (chairman)—What is all this to prove ?

WITNESS—That the information given in by the clerk of the union is not accurate as to the acreage held by the graziers whom it is proposed to deprive of their holdings.

LORD DUDLEY—*You have a good deal of untenanted land in your possession?*

WITNESS—I have a certain amount.

LORD DUDLEY—*And there are a number of small poor holdings adjoining?*

WITNESS—Yes; and if you want to add any land to them, I don't see why you should take any of mine. I don't see why you should do injustice to any decent Irish man or woman for the benefit of another.

LORD DUDLEY—You think these poor people with three acres do not want any more?

WITNESS—I say they are doing very well.

LORD DUDLEY—You think it is right for one person to hold three hundred or four hundred acres while a number of poor people are obliged to struggle on on three or four acres?

What more could Mr. Ginnell or Mr. Hyndman say?

A BOARD SECRETARY.

One of the most important spokesmen of the Congested Board, Mr. Lawson Micks, first secretary of Board, 1891—1898, and member of Local Government Board, gratified the Commission managers by the astounding claim for State-Socialist Supremacy and Endowment of the Congested Board, which is to be found in the *Evidence*, vol. I., pages 3, 4:—

MR. LAWSON MICKS—I am a member of the Local Government Board, and was first secretary of the Congested Districts Board. . . . I would give the Congested Districts Board power to declare any place congested, no matter what its size, *throughout Ireland*. . . . I would give the Board that power all over Ireland, including towns. . . . I would leave all the operations and expenditure of the Board to its own deliberate judgment, *without test or limitation*. . . . I would give the Congested Districts Board power to start industries, all sorts of industries, and to subsidize them. I would not say “subsidize,” but “develop the country.” *The Board requires compulsory powers, and at least £1,000,000 a year.*

It will be admitted that the efforts of the most generous landlord must sink into insignificance in

comparison with an omnipotent socialist bureaucracy, flinging about £1,000,000 a year of the money of the taxpayers, *without test or limitation!*

This is some of the folly with which the clerico-official Jacobins have corrupted the moral sense, and paralysed the very desire to work, among millions of the population. The political Church will soon be able to buy for a song, or hymn, half the land of Ireland.

THE COMPOSITION OF THE COMMISSION AND THE NUCLEUS POLICY.

WHAT IS THE NUCLEUS?—THE BISHOP OF THE BOARD—
A BOYCOTTING COMMISSIONER — PUNJAB POLITE-
NESS—SELECTION OF EVIDENCE.

THE composition of the Royal Commission was quite respectable and imposing. Dublin Castle is a past master in the construction of royal commissions, and its products can usually bear ordinary or current inspection. The permanent problem in this sort of undertaking is *to avoid public suspicion while working to a foregone conclusion*; and it may be said without hesitation that the general course pursued by the constructors of commissions is practically always substantially the same. A Dublin Castle commission always subdivides itself into these three parts: (1) the *nucleus*; (2) the *official and semi-official* assistants; and (3) the train, or circumference, of impartial and impressionable members, known for their sympathy with what they believe to be the wishes of Ireland, and believed to be incapable of seriously opposing, much less suspecting, their initiated colleagues.

The *nucleus* is the decisive feature of such commissions. By this is meant the man or small group of men *who know precisely what the Commission has been constructed to effect*, and the means to effect it, and who are the practical managers as well as the predominant partners. The scope for the investigation, the nature of the evidence, and at all events the nature of the witnesses, are the special sphere of the directing activity of the nucleus. The official and semi-official members, representing the Government

which has ratified the nucleus, are always understood to protect the nucleus from rude exploring hands. The train or fringe of impartial and impressionable outsiders endeavour to do their duty in the station to which the Under-Secretary has called them.

It must be observed that it is no trifling recommendation of this arrangement that it does not do violence to the principles or good faith of any of its agents. From the nucleus to the fringe, every member may be supposed to act according to his principles, and has in fact been selected for that very purpose. There is thus no personal reflection on any of the members of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into questions of so-called congestion in Ireland; and I am pleased to state they seem to have acted, *as they were selected to act*, according to the views which they personally entertain. From the nucleus to the fringe, every man does as he feels he ought to do, and has done as he felt he ought to have done. From the Lord Bishop of Raphoe to the humblest member of the Commission—I do not say which is the humblest—there is absolutely no ground for impugning the conscientious devotion of each and all to the previous ideas of each and all.

The official scope of the Commission is to inquire into the problem of what is called congestion in Ireland; but as the phrase “the problem of congestion” is only the official way of referring to everything relating to agriculture, manufactures, and fisheries throughout Ireland—“congestion” being only an unintelligible name for a half-understood reality—it follows that the scope of the Commission embraces everything which the Commission have a desire to include in it, and which the selection of evidence enables them to include. On the present occasion, the nucleus, or directing element, being passionately

engaged on behalf of the expropriation of Irish landlordism, it follows that, especially by means of the selection of evidence, all the other members of the inquiry are led almost irresistibly to consider that desirable object *from the nucleus point of view*. It is evident that, if the evidence producible before the inquiry were not subject to a prudent process of rejection and elimination, the appointers of the nucleus would run the most imminent risk of seeing the policy of the nucleus rejected by the other members of the Commission. The due selection of the evidence imposes itself, accordingly, as the fundamental necessity in all prearranged inquiries of this description.

I shall now divide members of the Congestion Commission as they fall under the headings of nucleus, or directing element; officials and semi-officials; and general members, or train. In a couple of cases probably members should be placed in more than one division, but it will suffice to describe them as above. Bearing in mind then that the primary object in view with the appointers of the Commission was to obtain recommendations in support of (1) increased supplies or increased subventions of public money for distribution by the clerico-Jacobin agencies of the Board among their actual and expected clients, and (2) the division among the clients of the Board of the estates of owners of property, not by voluntary agreement, but upon compulsory terms, it can be understood that this is also a precedent. If compulsory confiscation can be established within the actual sphere of the Congestion Board's operations, its extension to the rest of Ireland will only be a logical development; and the Church and the peasantry will be substantially the only remaining factors in a simplified situation. As will be seen further on, there is absolutely no foundation in fact for the use of the word "congestion." It is an inveracity naked and unashamed. I

only use it in conformity with official use and under protest.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON CONGESTION.

Nucleus Members.

- MOST REV. DR. PATRICK O'DONNELL, Bishop of Raphoe; Chief Director of the Congested Districts Board; Treasurer of the Land League Parliamentary Fund; ex-Chairman of *Freeman's Journal* Shareholders; Patron of the Ancient Order of Hibernians or Ribbon Society, etc., etc.
- MR. CONOR O'KELLY, M.P., Land League representative and representative of the county Mayo, one of the principal scenes of the agitation and subsidies of the Congested Districts Board; a warm supporter of landlord expropriation and boycotting, etc.

Official and Semi-official Members.

- SIR ANTONY MACDONNELL, Under-Secretary for Ireland; ex-Indian civil servant; absent from Ireland 1864—1902; probably entitled to be classed with the nucleus members.
- THE EARL OF DUDLEY, ex-Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; a sentimental Englishman; a hope of Maynooth.
- MR. J. BRYCE or MR. BIRRELL, Cabinet figures.
- ANGUS SUTHERLAND, Esq., Chairman of Scottish Fishery Board.
- SIR FRANCIS MOWATT, ex-Permanent Secretary to Treasury; member of royal commissions since 1851.

General Members, or Train.

- SIR JOHN COLOMB, authority on marine artillery, navy, army, militia, and volunteers, imperial strategy, colonial defence, supply in time of war, etc., etc., in other words an all-round critic and acute observer.
- WALTER KAVANAGH, Esq., Barrister-at-law.
- JOHN ANNAN BRYCE, Esq., M.P., a Scottish representative.

It will thus be seen that practically the members of this Royal Commission of Inquiry into the doings of the Congested Districts Board possessing local knowledge of the subject are the two nucleus members most deeply committed to the maintenance and extension of the policy of the Board, both on the lines of public

subvention or State socialism and of expropriation of the owners of property. Bishop Patrick O'Donnell has quite recently published a stirring appeal to the Irish constituencies to support the militant policy of Mr. John Redmond, whose identification with the cattle raiders is too well known to require explanation. On the occasion of the great demonstration by the Ancient Order of Hibernians, or Ribbon Secret Society, at Letterkenny on the 24th August to welcome Mr. Joseph Devlin, M.P., Mr. Redmond's lieutenant, as National President of the "Ancient Order," not only did Bishop Patrick O'Donnell afford the demonstration the use of the Bishop's field adjoining the new cathedral, but he attended in person the meeting, "where," in the words of the *Freeman's Journal*, "a platform was erected, and his Lordship, who was received with extraordinary enthusiasm, welcomed the people and expressed his deep interest in the Gaelic movement." A couple of score of the Bishop's dignitaries and clergymen accompanied their pastor, and the chair was taken by one of the resident clergymen of the cathedral. As chief dispenser of the benefactions of the Congested Districts Board, Bishop Patrick O'Donnell commands an irresistible influence in the congested districts. He rejects and returns members of Parliament at his will. The expediency of appointing this eminent functionary of the Board to inquire into his own proceedings is quite obvious accordingly.

The impartiality of this Commissioner's appointment as an "inquirer" into his own working of the Congested Board, the justice and propriety of his appointment from every public point of view, can be read at a glance in the following question and answer, the question by the Most Rev. Dr. O'Donnell and the answer by Sir Horace Plunkett, in the course of the latter's evidence before the Commission:—

BISHOP O'DONNELL—Here is the Congested Districts Board, with its successful fisheries and most useful parish committees. And now

do you think it would be unreasonable on the part of the members of the Congested Districts Board to consider it a little *audacious on the part of any other body in Ireland* to ask for a transfer of those duties from the Congested Districts Board while the Congested Districts Board had not finished its work?

SIR HORACE PLUNKETT—I should hope that the Congested Districts Board would discuss the matters strictly on their merits, and that *the question of audacity* would not come in unless they suspected the motives of the persons who made the suggestion. . . . On the other hand, I think it is really a question that should be looked at, not from the point of view of the feelings of the bodies engaged, but from the point of view of the real interests of the persons concerned—that is, the population of these poor districts.

A specimen investigator indeed! What possibly can be more absurd or a more patent fraud on the public than to appoint a reverend gentleman to inquire into the workings of a board of which he is himself the leading member, and the whole working of which fills him with such self-satisfaction, that he denounces as “audacity” any proposal to alter its control and transfer its authority?

Sir Horace Plunkett’s lack of approval of the irate Bishop was possibly not ignored by the Bishop’s political patrons when they drove Sir Horace Plunkett from public employment.

Mr. Conor O’Kelly, parliamentary representative from the congested districts, can also be described as an equally judicial inquirer into the proceedings of his patrons. Mr. Conor O’Kelly is a colleague of Mr. John Dillon in the parliamentary representation of Mayo, and, like his colleague, is full of the choicest spirit of the Congested Board. He is locally celebrated for the purity of his principles and his martyrdoms in their defence or exemplification. The journals of his party narrate with pride that he was removed from the magisterial bench when chairman of the county council, and that the county council under him was suspended by the Local Government Board for financial mismanagement. But he still stands erect in the breach, and at the Ardagh meeting

of the United Irish League on the 7th July last he is reported in the *Mayo News* of the 13th July to have proclaimed the gospel of the League in these impressive terms :—

There is only one programme that you can observe with any hope or chance of success. . . . I say to you, caring not what may result—boycott, absolute, rigorous, complete, and exhaustive. . . . There is many a way of killing a cat without choking it with butter. . . . I do not care what the results may be; I advise a boycott rigorous and complete.

It is pleasing to find that this fine fellow has been chosen by Chief Secretary and Under-Secretary a critic and judge between class and class in Ireland as a Royal Commissioner of Inquiry, etc.

This Commissioner, who was also referred to by Mr. P. Kenny as attempting to excite the opinion of the mob against his evidence, appears to have directed his exuberant observations against all witnesses who had not been “arranged” by the nucleus. Thus, when Sir Horace Plunkett declined to introduce politics into an economic question, Mr. Conor O’Kelly, M.P., after several preliminary sneers, culminated in this broad insult, which provoked a dignified protest from Sir Horace Plunkett :—

MR. O’KELLY—I am afraid there is considerable conflict in your case between the theory and the practice.

SIR HORACE PLUNKETT—That is a matter of opinion, but I don’t think it is a proper thing for you to say.

Mr. Conor O’Kelly is perfectly sincere in the violence of his opinions. Not he, but the nominators of the Commission, must be held responsible for his appearance in a capacity for which he was perfectly unfitted.

With regard to the Under-Secretary’s position upon the Commission, he no doubt represents with characteristic stubbornness the influence which brought him into the Irish administration from the sphere of Asiatic employment to which he was confined for

nearly forty years. Like Bishop O'Donnell, he is an inquirer into the policy of a board of which he is himself a member, and only second in influence to the patron of the Ancient Hibernians himself. He is believed to have been affiliated from his childhood to an order of ideas which class Irish Orangemen and Irish landlords not much above the creatures of chase. Accustomed to the irresponsible authority of paternal despotism in Oriental dependencies, he finds it difficult to realise the principles of Western constitutionalism, and he has no hesitation in adopting a demeanour towards critics or opponents more at home perhaps at Lucknow and Lahore. At a meeting of the Commission on the 24th September the manner in which the ex-Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab literally flew at a witness, who ventured to condemn the proceedings of one of the official boards with which Sir Antony MacDonnell is concerned, affords a very instructive illustration of that ex-Lieutenant Governor's capacity for judicial bearing and opinion. I quote a record of the scene from the daily Press of the date :—

At the sitting of the Royal Commission on Congestion in Ireland at Spiddal, county Galway, yesterday, the Rev. M. Hosty, parish priest of Knock, gave evidence regarding the dealings of the Estates Commissioners with the Comyn estate, county Galway, and said that the Commissioners had offered a price so low that no court could accept it.

Sir Antony MacDonnell asked the witness if he meant that the Estates Commissioners had deliberately offered a price that could only be accepted to the detriment of the owner, and which they knew would be refused. The witness replied that such was his opinion.

SIR ANTONY MACDONNELL—You are the first clergyman who has imputed such conduct to the Estates Commissioners. Not only are you the first clergyman, but you are the first man. *I do not think much of your opinion.*

THE WITNESS—You are quite welcome !

Here, indeed, we have an instance of that “bullying cross-examination” of which the author of

“Economics for Irishmen” speaks in describing his experiences before this strange Commission. It is quite the style of the *zuberdust* official in India, the high-handed little bureaucrat who has made British rule the popular thing it is. A respected witness presumes to give evidence that the Estates Commissioners, of whom the Under-Secretary is one, do not offer fair value for estates; and at once the Under-Secretary, sitting as a Royal Commissioner of Inquiry, shouts at him: “I do not think much of your opinion”!

There is nothing in the past or the present of the non-official members effectually to counterbalance the plain intention of the foregoing nominations. Scotchmen are not likely to be better acquainted than Anglo-Indians with the inner working and development of the clerico-Jacobinical confederacy in Ireland during the past quarter of a century. A Royal Commissioner who was a Royal Commissioner nearly sixty years ago can scarcely be accused of the desire or the capacity for too laborious investigation. Generally speaking, in his case, as in the case of most of his colleagues, the judicious selection of the evidence is necessarily calculated to direct the formation of the verdict. The disinclination of the Commission managers to allow any independent witness to give evidence *previous to the Commissioners being called upon to hear the selected evidence in the various localities of Ireland* can be very well understood from these preliminaries.

* * * * *

As the nucleus members and the official members are usually more clearly “arranged” or related than may appear, the gist of the whole business mostly lies in bringing the general members, or train, to “toe the mark” without unseemly hesitation. In some of these Dublin Castle commissions there is quite a

great effort made to have a troop of general members which may impress the public and the Parliament. The order, as well as selection, of the evidence is specially designed to impress in the desired manner these useful auxiliaries. The order of procedure is commonly as follows: First, there is a long array of witnesses officially connected with the subject of investigation, whether it be university colleges or experiments in State socialism. These professional gentlemen may be relied upon to give a mass of details in a dignified way, and, even when they differ, to say nothing which will injure the undertaking in which they are all alike concerned. Heaven help the poor devils if they dared! If there are any avowed opponents of the scheme which is favoured by the nucleus and the officials, their testimony is introduced after the closing of the official evidence. This both gives the idea of fair play, and places the opponents very much in the position of accused persons who are on their defence. The representatives of the Landowners' Convention, for instance, played this part before the Congested Commission. Then comes the real business of the selectors. Uninitiated members, under the careful guidance of the Nucleus and Company, are literally overwhelmed with evidence on behalf of the favoured scheme. In the present case they are taken down to innumerable localities in the congested districts where innumerable deputations and delegates, and local authorities and local clergymen, *all interested for one reason or another in the uninterrupted flow of public money*, swarm into the witness-box and draw sensational picture after sensational picture of the indescribable blessings of the Board's activity and the necessity of greatly increasing the power and the money at the disposal of such a beneficent institution in the future. In the whole of the process the nucleus watches jealously against the intrusion of

the independent witness.* Thus primed and thus instructed, the uninitiated members proceed to the formation of their report; and generally the result can be as safely predicted as in any other card game in which the winning players have marked the cards.

Of course there is nothing new about this policy. Every commission which was ever issued from Dublin Castle has been packed, and its course has been prescribed, not with a view to eliciting truth, but to eliciting *what could be passed off as truth* for the purposes of the originators and managers of the Commission. When I applied for a hearing by the present Commission, and when I gave them clearly to understand, in the synopsis of evidence submitted to them, that I was not taken in by the pretexts under which State socialism is manipulated in Ireland, that I had seen through the mendacious farce of "congestion," and that I was prepared to state what really are the causes which have pauperised Ireland, I was fully prepared to meet the treatment which I have met. With this preface, it only remains for me to lay before the public what I asked to lay before the Commission, adding that detail and explanation which I should

* As this book is even more an indictment of Dublin Castle than of the political clergy which it has tempted and hired, paying Secret Service with licence to extort and oppress, an illustration of its methods in another matter of present interest, the University question, is germane to the discussion.

When the Packed University Commission was sitting a few years ago, one witness, though a Vice-President of the Graduates Association of the Royal University, was refused examination "because he had written a book on University Education" against sectarianism. Two petitions, signed by a hundred Catholic laymen, including graduates and students, against a sectarian scheme, were left without notice. Another petition in the opposite sense, *signed by two Catholic laymen*, at once obtained an invitation to be witnesses.

When Mr. Birrell visited Belfast the other day, and was interviewing representatives of sectarianism, he refused to receive a deputation from the Education Reform Association, which supports undenominational views in education.

have endeavoured to give in the witness chair, adding also some citations from the published evidence which illustrate leading points in my statement, together with the other developments which are required in the writing of a book.

Notes and Illustrations.]

THE CONGESTED BOARD AND THE LAND LEAGUE.

CLERICAL REVOLUTIONISTS.

“The reforms we shall receive are precisely those we can exact. . . . Our people are to-day the masters of Ireland. . . . The toiling masses of Great Britain have good reasons of their own to join us in overthrowing the ascendancy of the classes.”

Manifesto of Most Rev. Bishop O'Donnell, member of Congested Districts Board and Commission.

“My view is this, that the fact of ownership makes a man heartless and unsympathetic.”

SIR A. MACDONNELL—Where the landlord is compulsorily expropriated, do you not think he is entitled to compensation for disturbance?

REV. DENIS O'HARA, P.P.—Yes, to some extent.

LORD DUDLEY—You are contemplating compulsory purchase. Do you suggest that the landlord should be compelled to sell where he is going to lose income by it?

REV. DENIS O'HARA, P.P.—Well, I do not know that there would be anything wrong even in suggesting that.

Evidence of Rev. Father O'Hara, member of Congested Districts Board.

THE LAND LEAGUE POLICY WANTS BISHOP O'DONNELL AND FATHER O'HARA.

LORD DUDLEY—We understand you represent the United Irish League?

MR. JOHN FITZGIBBON—I am a member of the United Irish League, and occupy a seat on the Central Council. I was deputed by that body to give evidence before you.

LORD DUDLEY—Do you say that the agrarian policy of the United Irish League is similar to that of the Land League?

MR. JOHN FITZGIBBON—I will show you it is. The wording of the constitution of the United Irish League, so far as it relates to the land, runs: “The abolition of landlordism in Ireland by means of a universal and compulsory system of sales of the landlord's

interest." I ask the Commission, if there is to be a terrible row over these lands, whether it would not be much better to have that row now. We want the land.

MR. CONOR O'KELLY, M.P.—Speaking for the United Irish League, you tell the Commission that it is the strong view of that body that the Congested Districts Board should be preserved?

MR. JOHN FITZGIBBON—Yes, decidedly. Take the constitution of the Board. Take Father Denis O'Hara and Most Rev. Dr. O'Donnell. These two men in themselves, with the assistance they would get from men in the country, would in themselves be able to settle the entire question.

Evidence of Mr. John Fitzgibbon on behalf of the League Central Council.

MORE LIGHT ON THE CLERICAL REVOLUTION.

It is important to note that the foregoing Delegate of the League, besides proclaiming the Clerical Members of the Board to be the special choice of the League, is an open advocate of cattle driving and "keeping your powder dry." It is always the same conjunction of Political Sacerdocy and Social War. I quote from the Press of January 14th:—

At a Nationalist demonstration on Sunday at Hill Street, County Roscommon, Mr. John Fitzgibbon, Chairman of the Roscommon County Council, asked the people *to suspend for a short time any further drives*, as Mr. Birrell was going himself to have a cattle drive by splitting up the waste lands, putting back the people, and doing in a legal manner what the tenantry was being prosecuted for. Accordingly, for the present the people should hang up their arms but should keep their ranks unbroken and their powder dry. Then if the promised legislation were not what they were led to expect, and if England were once more going to break her promises, *they could use their powder and finish the work begun by Parnell.*

REVOLUTIONARY CLERICS: HOW THE BOARD HAS AGRICULTURE REPRESENTED.

MR. HEALY'S REVELATION—DOWN WITH OWNERSHIP!—
DOWN WITH THE CLASSES!

As the Congested Fiction Board professes to develop the leading industries of Ireland, and as agriculture is the leading industry in a special sense, the Congested Fiction Board must have one agricultural member at least. The Right Hon. Frederick Wrench had been appointed accordingly in 1891, on the formation of the Congested Fiction Board, an official member specially to represent agriculture. Mr. Wrench had very good qualifications for the part. He had been a practical farmer and estate manager all his life. He is said to have done most efficient work in those early days when the Board devoted itself to carrying out its original function of assisting industry without revolutionising land. But his time was to be short. Within two years after his first appointment the Agricultural Commissioner was removed to another department and another sphere. His place was shortly to be taken by the Rev. Father Denis O'Hara. Father Denis O'Hara is a parish priest of East Mayo, and I have seen a laudatory account of the reverend gentleman in a Dublin paper which described him as the creator of an "oasis in a desert," through the Board's expenditure of £500,000 in East Mayo, the constituency that elects Mr. John Dillon. In fact, I remember seeing a number of complaints from clergymen to the effect that they had no chance whatever of creating oases with public money, as they did not

happen to be members of the Board. I am sure that Father Denis O'Hara has acted entirely according to his conscientious views of his rights and his duties in the circumstances. I do not impugn the conscientiousness of anybody in the course of these remarks. But a great many men can act according to their consciences, and the public loss and detriment may be enormous in consequence. This is precisely the case with the Congested Board.

It is not, however, sufficient to know that Father Denis O'Hara took the place of the original Commissioner for Agriculture, who had been allowed to keep his post on the Board for only two years. Who was Father Denis O'Hara? Why was he put on the Board? Was he really a representative of skilled agriculture or of party politics? That keen and experienced politician Mr. T. M. Healy, M.P., will relate to us the genesis of Father Denis O'Hara's appointment. In his mordant treatise on the causes which wrecked Home Rule published by the *Nation* office six or seven years ago, the member for North Louth relates, under the year 1893, the wholesale appointments to all kinds of paid situations in Ireland of the nominees of the Dillon faction in the Parliamentary party which took place under the rule of Chief Secretary John Morley. Here we have in five lines the history of the introduction of the partisan priest into the Congested Board:—

As to honorary appointments, the Most Rev. Dr. O'Donnell, who presided over the *Freeman* shareholders' committee, was made a member of the Congested Districts Board. The Very Rev. Denis O'Hara, P.P., Mr. Dillon's chief supporter in the west, was also appointed one of the members.

Coincidentally with the appearance of Bishop O'Donnell and Father O'Hara on the Board, under these circumstances, came the transformation of the Board into a great land-purchasing and land-distributing agency, which, by its free use of public

money and the distribution of farms at cheap rates, was to play such a revolutionary part in inflaming the indignation of the peasantry against private landlords who could draw on no public funds to confer similar benefactions. The appointment of these two clergymen was in intimate connection with the ascendancy of the clerical spokesman-in-chief, Mr. John Dillon, M.P., an ascendancy which has never weakened, though it has been more disguised in the present day. We can now recognise that the reverend functionaries had a political mission which they have conscientiously endeavoured to fulfil, and we should never underestimate their deep sincerity. There is a decidedly amusing passage in the examination of Mr. Wrench before the Commission, a very funny passage indeed, which shows us Lord Dudley and Sir Francis Mowatt, on the one hand, trying to get at the fundamental humbug of Father O'Hara's agricultural qualification, and Bishop O'Donnell and Sir Antony MacDonnell, on the other hand—supported by the congenial Mr. Conor O'Kelly, M.P.—trying as stoutly to prove that a parish priest must be the very pink of a scientific agriculturist "because he knows all the farms in his parish." I am quite sure he does, and the reasonable capacity of every farmer for paying him dues and collections, which is a totally different matter from being agricultural adviser for half Ireland. But here is the passage from Mr. Wrench's examination, with poor Mr. Wrench endeavouring to satisfy the whole of his questioners:—

SIR FRANCIS MOWATT—Agriculture, industries, and special circumstances—was each man appointed for all those three? Was Father O'Hara appointed for agriculture, for industries, and for special circumstances?

MOST REV. DR. O'DONNELL—Chiefly for agriculture. Mr. Green was temporary member in respect of fisheries. The other temporary member was Mr. Balfour, who was not in respect of anything specially except that he was the founder of the Board.

THE CHAIRMAN—Apparently Father O'Hara was appointed in 1895

to succeed Colonel Peacocke. Colonel Peacocke was appointed a temporary member?

MR. WRENCH—Yes.

Colonel Peacocke was an original member?

Yes.

And Father O'Hara succeeded him in 1895?

Yes.

If Father O'Hara is not the representative of agriculture on the Board, then, I take it that there is no representative of agriculture on the Board. Is that so?

If Father O'Hara is not, there is no special representative now.

But, supposing he is, I should want to ask this: what experience has Father O'Hara got of agriculture?

I think Father O'Hara knows a great deal about agriculture.

Has he special knowledge of agriculture, and seeds, and things of that kind?

Well, agriculture prevails in the district in which he lives.

As a resident. Has he ever had, as you have had, for instance, personal experience of the management of agricultural proceedings?

That I cannot say.

SIR ANTONY MACDONNELL—As an observer, a keen observer, I do not suppose Father O'Hara, like any other priest, enters largely into farm work, but he is a most acute and keen observer of what is going on in his neighbourhood.

THE CHAIRMAN—But then Mr. Wrench has had practical experience in these things himself. It cannot be said that Father O'Hara has had the same kind of experience, at any rate.

MR. O'KELLY, M.P.—What kind of experience have you had?

THE CHAIRMAN—That question was asked before you came in.

MR. WRENCH—I will repeat it if you like. I have farmed land in five different counties, and managed for a good many people, besides.

MOST REV. DR. O'DONNELL—Do you say that for the purposes of the Board in respect to agriculture the knowledge possessed by Father O'Hara was exceedingly useful?

Certainly, because he knew a great deal about the local conditions.

Did he know all the farms there?

Yes; I used to discuss questions with him.

This delightful extract from the evidence is worth the study. We have the Bishop cutting in, not only as a questioner, but as a witness to the agricultural qualifications of "Mr. Dillon's chief supporter in the west," the versatile pastor of East Mayo. Then there is the Chairman, Lord Dudley, most sensibly trying to find out what real qualifications, if any, for the post of agricultural member are possessed by Father O'Hara,

finally getting at the luminous fact that Father O'Hara is an agriculturist because "agriculture prevails in the district in which he lives," then the zealous Sir Antony MacDonnell pleading that not only Father O'Hara, but "any other priest," is qualified to be an agricultural member, or command the Channel Fleet, or anything else which happens to be handy, then the final effort of the Bishop to whitewash the priest by declaiming on "the exceeding utility for the purposes of the Board" of "the knowledge possessed by Father O'Hara." Quite correct, most reverend Bishop! "For the purposes of the Board" the pastor of Kiltimagh, being ecclesiastically commissioned to sow the good seed of religion, is consequently the right man in the right place as the special representative of Irish agriculture on a public department which spends millions of public money "in connection with agriculture" from one end of Ireland to the other. Because he is a pastor, he is similarly qualified to be special representative of sheep-raising and sheep-shearing.

Lord Dudley neatly summarised the net result to be, "If Father O'Hara is not the representative of agriculture on the Board, then there is no representative of agriculture on the Board."

When the Rev. Father O'Hara himself came to be examined, he at once, and very frankly, gave the measure of his qualifications as scientific agriculturist:—"I have lived all my life in congested districts; I have lived in them as curate, as administrator, and as parish priest." If living in a congested district is a qualification for membership of the Board, it would seem that Father O'Hara has several hundred thousand living rivals. It is true that all these are not equally recommended by the Dillon faction of the Parliamentary party. Father O'Hara, already in his third answer to questions put by the Commission, placed on record the character of his impartiality,

where impartiality is so necessary upon a board which interferes so profoundly with agrarian questions. He blurted out this denunciation of the hated gentry: "The landlords as a class are heartless and unsympathetic." Again, said Father O'Hara, "I mean landlordism—that the fact of a man becoming a landlord makes him heartless." Sir John Colomb, one of the Commissioners, tried to get the redoubtable Father to modify the vigour of his denunciation even a little bit:—

"I want to ask you just this question: Do you think that some of the words you used to describe a particular class of Irishmen very strong?"

"Not a bit stronger than they deserve," said Father O'Hara.

"Now that I have pointed out to you that it is a very strong statement as regards the class of Irishmen, you do not wish to modify it?"

"Not in the least, because my experience in all my life is that I never knew a landlord to care very much how his tenants lived if he got his rent."

There is an impartial Board member for you!

Next Sir Antony MacDonnell tried his hand in a politic effort to limit the sweep of Father O'Hara's anathema:—

SIR ANTONY MACDONNELL—Your remarks do not apply to landlords in general, but to your own particular observation?

FATHER O'HARA—I have no acquaintance with landlords elsewhere, but I say that if in going round Connaught you will find a landlord that did anything for his people, I think the people would look astonished at your discovery.

Sir John Colomb returned to the charge in a final and despairing effort to mollify "Mr. Dillon's chief supporter in the west," as Mr. T. M. Healy calls him. But Sir John got more than he bargained for.

SIR JOHN COLOMB—Then am I right in taking your view to be this, that the fact of ownership makes a man heartless and unsympathetic?

FATHER O'HARA—*That is my view.*

That ownership in a moral sense is a bad thing?

Well, as it has worked out in Ireland, at any rate.

I do not think that it is necessary further to multiply quotations. The least suspicious member of the Irish gentry can hardly be blamed for regarding with distrust a Congested Fiction Board which is dominated by such a standard of judicial impartiality as this. Neither need we wonder at the closeness of the connection between the Ancient Order of Ribbonmen and the leaders of the Board. All landlords are to be driven out of Ireland. The mere fact of being a landlord excludes a man from the sympathies of human nature. It is to promote these views that the Congested Fiction is glutted with public funds, while education is starved and degraded from one end of Ireland to the other. And there is no doubt, either, as to the popular belief in Father O'Hara's power.*

Father Denis O'Hara is evidently convinced of the rectitude of his fanaticism; but fanatics are not more wholesome to a country because they are troubled by few misgivings. Is it not simply too absurd for a pantomime to have a public board, whose advertised mission is the application of benevolence and beneficence to landed estates, staffed with zealots not reluctant to avow their belief that "the fact of ownership makes a man heartless and unsympathetic"? The Congested Fiction Board of Ireland has certainly some claims to be accepted as one of the natural heirs of Karl Marx.

It is not un instructive to note that Bishop O'Donnell is not only an agrarian reformer of the robust type of Father O'Hara, but that he professes political views in keeping with the doctrines of Mr. John

* Referring to the intimidation and boycotting practised against a Mr. Jordan, a Government servant, who had supplied information of the doings of the Congested Board clergy which the clergy did not approve, the author of "Economics for Irishmen" observes: "I am told now the clergy are at work to get him discharged from his employment. . . . It is assumed at Kiltimagh that Father O'Hara can get any one he likes into the Government service or out of it." Of course, this is only popular belief.

Redmond in their most subversive pose. Thus, for instance, I find in the *Tablet* of the 31st August last a perfectly characteristic outburst of the Most Rev. Dr. O'Donnell in support of Mr. John Redmond's demand for "a great and menacing agitation." Laying down the maxim—which is the canonisation of force—that "the reforms we shall receive are *precisely those we can exact*"—is this the mission of the Christian ministry?—the Bishop of the Board solemnly informs his readers that "there are no limits to what a thoroughly efficient Irish party can achieve when backed by a united and determined people." What, "no limits"! Next we have a fierce appeal to the semi-socialist allies among the English population. The good Bishop extols "the toiling masses of Great Britain who have good reasons of their own *to join us in overthrowing the ascendancy of the classes.*" Are these the sentiments which qualify for membership of the public Board that has to deal impartially with class and class in Ireland? Next, the Bishop remarks that "an unreformed House of Lords will be slow to dispute the people's will when clearly expressed." And he finally appeals to a "united Ireland to show that it is for the advantage of England to be rid of our trouble."

All which certainly will not prevent the Board from helping the Parish Committees to as much of the taxation of the public, including the abused landlords, as the lay friends in Dublin Castle may enable prelate and priest to employ "in overthrowing the ascendancy of the classes." We can hardly get a five-pound note for education; but there is any amount of public money at the disposal of the clerical agitator and the socialist demagogue.

Bishop O'Donnell and Father O'Hara are the choice and the hope of the new Land League. They are the men who have endeared the Congested Board to the warmest sympathies of the Central Council of

the United Irish League. They have used the money of the taxpayers and the authority of the Government in such a manner as to make the working of the Board, its continuance, and its extension, the one thing supremely adequate for the entire realisation of that Land League paradise which is to replace the "ascendency of the classes," and on which the Bishop of the Board bestows his specially reserved benediction. That characteristic selection of the selectors of the Royal Commission of Inquiry, Mr. Conor O'Kelly, M.P., himself no mean judge of anarchical methods, from the boycott to the cattle drive, has the merit of eliciting from the special delegate of the new Land League before the Commission, Mr. John Fitzgibbon, the enthusiastic declaration that "it is the strong view of the United Irish League that the Congested Districts Board should decidedly be preserved." It is the voice of the simplest gratitude. The Congested Districts Board has done more with the money of the taxpayers to sap the remaining foundations of civil order and national progress in Ireland than was ever accomplished by all the dollars of the American dynamiters. In the worst times the worst of "moonlighters" could not at all events quite persuade himself that Mr. Pat Ford and Mr. Pat Egan were exactly canonical authorities upon matters of *meum* and *tuum*. It is since consecrated lips have been openly heard to advocate "the overthrow of the classes" and "the compulsory loss of a landlord's income" that the perfect orthodoxy of "menacing agitation" has become encircled with a halo.

I do not dispute the entire conscientiousness of the most reverend and reverend ecclesiastics. I need not even question their interpretation of the sacerdotal mission. But on a public department, expending public money, what is the responsibility of the Government which appointed and maintained, in functions of the highest impartiality and the most judicial trust, the arch-

fanatics of civil discord and private confiscation? The country has been flooded with mendicancy and unmanliness, with idleness and sloth, with cruelty to dumb animals in every cattle drive, with heartlessness to untaught children, with cynical dishonesty, with brutal menace. It was the Government which gave the Congested Districts Board all its position and all its bribery.*

* Speaking of bribery, though I make no personal charge, still the injustice of leaving enormous sums of public money in the hands of an Unrepresentative Board must produce scandals; and the connexion between Mr. John Dillon, M.P., the Bishop of the Board, and Father O'Hara—both of whom are said by Mr. Healy, M.P., to have been appointed by Mr. John Dillon's influence—make any appearance of favouritism on behalf of Mr. John Dillon's constituents all the more conspicuous.

Now we have a Leitrim clergyman, Rev. Father Meehan, C.C., who made complaint to the Commission (*Evidence VI.*, 118—20) of the neglect with which Leitrim is treated by the Congested Board:—

“I refer to the neglect of this county by the Congested Districts Board. . . . The amount spent on acquiring estates by the Board is £557,847. . . . All that has been done in County Leitrim in this direction is the purchase of a single estate for £850. . . . *In Swineford alone £375,000 has been spent in estate purchase. . . .* The Parish Committees of Swineford Union have got £7,855. . . . The Parish Committees for the whole County of Leitrim have only got £729.”

Swineford Union is in East Mayo. Mr. John Dillon is M.P. for East Mayo. It follows that, since Mr. John Dillon got Father O'Hara made member of the Board, Mr. Dillon's constituents have had enormous sums of public money spent among them by the Board. As will be mentioned later, Father O'Hara nominated Mr. John Dillon in 1906 for re-election by the constituency which had received these enormous sums. Mr. Dillon was re-elected.

THE PARISH PRIEST COMMITTEES AND THEIR TWO THOUSAND AGENTS.

THE PRIEST IS THE COMMITTEE—PAYING INSANITATION
—PRIESTS AND CATTLE-DRIVERS—THE BOARD'S
BISHOP MR. REDMOND'S TREASURER.

IN dwelling upon the Land League partisanship of Bishop O'Donnell and Father O'Hara—and be it always understood that I fully accept the sincerity of that partisanship—I have had also in mind the fact that these Board potentates, though themselves subject to superiors, are practically the generals-in-chief of the vast organisation of the Parish Committees, or parish priest committees, as they deserve to be called. These are a network of sub-organisations, some 160 in number, spread over the whole of the vast space irrigated by the funds of the Board, and practically consisting of the parish priests and their nominees. These committees are considered to be specially concerned with the allocation of grants and rewards of public money to induce the pious inhabitants to practise some sanitation, to provide sheds for their animals outside the dwelling-house, etc. In practice, the priests and the priests' nominees direct the beneficence of the Board in all the allocations of public funds; and their recommendations of jobs to be undertaken, relief to be granted, or employment to be conferred, form the main guidance of the Board, upon which the main direction of the priestly organisation is so vigilantly represented by Bishop O'Donnell and Father O'Hara. Taking the number of committeemen on each Parish Committee as being the priest and a dozen nominees, we have the

formidable organisation of 2,000 clerical agents, generally corresponding to the type of political zealot represented by the clerical members of the Board, and extending the vast influence of the sacerdotal reputation and the sacerdotal command of public money over the entire west of Ireland. Clearly, whether the object of the clerical authorities were to spread a boycott or to bless a cattle drive, to agitate for land redistribution or to return parliamentary representatives of the Sheehy and Ginnell stamp, there is here, from board to committee, a graduated agency with which no landlord and no private candidate could possibly contend. The men who distribute public funds among the population to-day may to-morrow invite them to join the Ribbonmen, or to "make the country hotter than hell for the grabber," or to oppose university emancipation, or to elect Mr. Dillon or Mr. Conor O'Kelly, or to do anything else which can tend to tighten the grip of the political priest upon Ireland.

Of course, the excuse of the clerical allies in Dublin Castle for all this priestly ascendancy in the distribution of public funds is, that the priest is wanted to make the people clean themselves, or exert themselves, or improve themselves at all. Now this is simply twaddle, and impudently dishonest twaddle. If there has been any improvement, it is due to the public money of the Board and the co-operation of the skilled instructors, skilled fishermen, skilled artisans, employed by the Board. *The influence of the priest was in full bloom since generations, and the people remained insanitary, slothful, and unimproved.* So far from the political priest being any assistance to the useful work of the Board, he has been a danger, a hurt, and an encumbrance. The least evil of his presence has been the general belief of his benighted flock that his success in "getting Government money for the parish" entitled him to a share on collection

day and when he was church-building or convent-building. Of course, it entitled him to select the local and parliamentary representatives. The parish priest committees are reported to decide the election of thirty members of Parliament and to influence as many more. All this will be more fully understood when the reader has studied some details of the politico-Jacobin activity of these clerical agitators.

By the way, there is some amusing fencing in the minutes of evidence, when clerical witnesses try to mitigate, may I say, the sacerdotal complexion of the organisation. They love to talk of "ministers of all religious denominations," as if the sparse non-priestly ministers of religion would interfere between pastor and flock. Thus the extraction of information from Father O'Hara takes this course :—

MR. SUTHERLAND—You said you had 160 committees?

FATHER O'HARA—Yes.

MR. SUTHERLAND—What is the average number of members?

FATHER O'HARA—The average number is six, first elected. Then the clergymen of all denominations are members. The landlords and agents don't attend very often, but they are members. You might put down twelve as the average number of each committee.

MR. SUTHERLAND—That is practically an organisation of 2,000 members you have located all over Ireland?

FATHER O'HARA—Yes.

Then the useful Sir Antony MacDonnell chips in :—

SIR ANTONY MACDONNELL—You gave this subject special attention yourself?

FATHER O'HARA—I did.

SIR ANTONY MACDONNELL—*The Board is indebted to you and Dr. O'Donnell in the matter. In fact, it is your work.*

So we have the Under-Secretary committed beforehand to the most gushing gratitude for all this precious network of the clerical parish committees. "Better be friends with the judge than with the law." Sir Antony MacDonnell, it must be remembered, is, like Bishop O'Donnell and Father O'Hara, member of the Board under inquiry, as well as, like

Bishop O'Donnell, member of the Commission of Inquiry. What a farce and what a family party!

The Chairman got an instructive reply from this reverend witness as to the position of "ministers of all denominations" on the committees:—

LORD DUDLEY—I suppose the parish priest is the chairman?

FATHER O'HARA—*As a rule, he is.*

Bishop O'Donnell got almost wroth with another witness who blurted out that the parish priest was sometimes the whole committee:—

BISHOP O'DONNELL—The members are men in the locality?

MR. MITCHELL—Yes. *In some parishes there is no one but the parish priest.*

BISHOP O'DONNELL—Please do not give us extreme cases.

The political priest is the Board; the political priest is the Committee; the political priest is the Commission; the political priest is the parliamentary representation; the political priest is the boycotting League; the political priest is the Ribbon organisation; the political priest makes the agitation; the political priest controls the cash.

There is indeed a grim comicality about the theory advanced in support of these priest committees and their control of Board subsidies out of public funds. In Donegal, for instance, it appears that the coddling of the pseudo-congested population in the matter even of the toleration of domestic filthiness and insanitation has reached such a pitch under the beneficent sway of the Board that the rate-paid sanitary officers avoid doing any sanitary inspection, lest it should shock the finer feelings of the inhabitants who prefer the pig in the room and the muck heap at the door. So the parish committee steps in and says to the clerical muck-lover: "My dear, high-spirited, fine fellow, you do quite right to object to moving your cherished manure heap under the rude compulsion of sanitary officers. But do, if you please, what we respectfully

suggest. As you know, we have a lot of public funds from the taxes of common taxpayers all over the kingdom who have to keep clean or go to gaol. Now if you will most kindly build a little shed for your pig, and put him to sleep there, and if you will condescend to shift the dung heap a few yards from the door of your house, we will give you thirty shillings or maybe a couple of pounds. Now won't you, please?"

I say nothing for the moment of the utter impudence of this way of spending the money of the taxpayer; but just consider the boasted results of all that "beneficent influence of the saintly pastors of the people" which has produced a population so degraded as not to perform the commonest offices of sanitation unless bribed out of the taxes! "The first condition of the grant is that the man removes the cows from the dwelling-house, and the manure heap from the kitchen door." Build a shed for your cattle, instead of having their dung on the house floor; clear off that mass of foul-smelling filth which is poisoning your little children. And the pious peasant of bishop-ridden Ireland answers back: "Shan't! Not unless you pay me well." *O sancta simplicitas!*

Yet consider that here at last the Board has founded a new industry. Even the long-suffering Chairman of the Commission, Lord Dudley, was driven to exclaim: "The Congested Districts Board has been trying to create new industries for twenty years, and has failed in them all." There is to be no failure here. The faithful peasant who got so much coin of the realm a few months ago for indispensable sanitation can come back smiling and bargain as follows:—

CONGESTED PEASANT—Yez gev me £2 a while ago for putting the muck pit away from the children.

CONGESTED COMMITTEE—We did. Well?

CONGESTED PEASANT—Well, it's this well. It's too much thrubble entirely. Me back's bruk carrying the muck ten yards or more. I'll put it at the dure agin, if I don't get somethin' for

my labour. Shure, it's Government money, and ye needn't be close-fisted.

CONGESTED COMMITTEE—Of course, of course, my fine fellow. The Government owes us hundreds of millions for those plantations by Cromwell, and why should you clean for nothing while there's money in the Bank of England? Here's another £2 for you.

CONGESTED PEASANT—God bless yer honours! And, shure, I'll vote for yer Parlimint man whin the election comes round. Hurrah for our ginerous clargy, and no forrin edication!

What can be more natural or creditable? It is the very quintessence of the policy of the pseudo-Congested Board, its Ribbonman allies, and its Parish Committees. Without money down no personal or domestic cleanliness in congested Donegal. Though rainwater is plentiful, it is a shilling a man for washing his face. That is how we make Ireland a nation.

As we know, the most reverend Bishop of the Congested Board, along with his other political engagements, is treasurer for Mr. Redmond's parliamentary party. The most reverend Bishop wants "the toiling masses of Great Britain" to aid the Irish in the war against the classes. Here is a specimen of his protegee Mr. Redmond's agrarian war in Ireland. The speech from which the extract was taken was delivered in the neighbourhood of Lord Clanricarde's estate at Portumna on the 6th October last, and was directed against the new tenants occupying the place of those who refused to pay their rent in conformity with the Land League plan of campaign a quarter of a century ago. There can be no mistaking the meaning of this clerico-agrarian firebrand's call for the continuance of the land war and his denunciation of peace as a "dishonour to the district and Ireland." Mr. Redmond is singularly blind and deaf if he does not know that "the land war" means cruelty and murder:—

I am sure the majority of the planters will agree to go, but *whether they agree or don't agree, they have got to go.* And if they don't go,

it would be absurd for any man to hope that peace could be maintained in this district. *If they refuse to go, here, at any rate, the land war will go on,* and, indeed, I have no hesitation in saying that under these circumstances if there is refusal on their part peace in this district would be a dishonour to this district and to Ireland.

Unless the threatened men yield to threats of violence, then the threats must become acts. This is the plain meaning which every moonlighter and boycotter may place on the counsels of the politician for whom the Bishop of the Board is the purse-bearer and collector. I trust that the Most Rev. Bishop O'Donnell will excuse me if I conclude that when the clergy abstain from condemning such criminal incitements, and when they remain in official connection of the closest kind with criminal agitators, they must be held to participate in the responsibility.

As a fact, the clergy do not confine themselves to passive approval and assistance. At a meeting held by Mr. Ginnell, M.P., the cattle-driving organiser, in the town of Mullingar, in county Westmeath, on the 3rd November last, the following characteristic letter was read from one of those innumerable priestly zealots who have prevented all possibility of the coming of peace in Ireland for the last quarter of a century. The writer was the Rev. James Murphy, parish priest of Multifarnham, and his pretended refusal to discuss "the moral aspects of cattle-driving," coupled with the grotesque ferocity of his attack on the landowning classes, is only too exact a reproduction of the incitations, both public and private, which have been directed to the rural population by unworthy spiritual guides for generations. A dominant section of the popular clergy are, as they have been, constantly engaged in a piratical and lawless war without quarter upon the Irish gentry; and the Congested Board is only one of the weapons:—

I wish the meeting every success in its efforts to again repeople the country. Without venturing any opinion on the moral aspects

of "cattle-driving," I may state that the "clawss" who have such holy horror of the proceedings nowadays had not in themselves or their predecessors sixty or seventy years ago such righteous indignation when the "human being drivings" were in vogue. The beings made after God's image and likeness—but they were "Hirish"; what matter?—could be driven out of their homes to starve and die by the wayside or in workhouses and coffin ships, and no hand or voice raised to denounce such inhumanity, whilst the brute beast nowadays cannot be moved uninjured and unharmed without the cry of "intimidation," "robbery," "confiscation," "danger to the Empire," etc., being raised by the carrion Press and crew that still dominate the country. . . . But individuals must yield when the good of the community is at stake; so let all "eleven months' men" put "finis" to their transactions when "a bold peasantry, their country's pride," shall again inhabit the lands that God and nature intended for them.

You could not find much to exceed this sacerdotal product in harangues of anarchists and nihilists.* Every historian knows that the Irish gentry lost their estates in thousands by the same famine and free trade which drove the tenantry to ruin, and the Encumbered Estates Acts were the "coffin ships" of hundreds of landlords who had spent their last shilling on their starving tenantry. When such horrible appeals to

* This priest's impudent description of the cruel practice of cattle-driving as only "the moving of brute beasts uninjured and unharmed," a description openly intended to absolve the consciences, if such exist, of the criminals, may be usefully compared with the advice given by Ginnell himself in a speech on the 3rd October last. After preliminary inquiries as to "whether no hazel grew there, and no ash-poles," this member of Parliament for the United Irish League of priests and people in North Westmeath went on to direct his hearers to "move" the hunted cattle with scrupulous gentleness: "He did not approve of any heavier blow than such a gentle touch of the hazel *as would make the bullocks run about five miles away.*"

It is certainly regrettable that Mr. Ginnell, M.P., has not experienced in his own person "such a gentle touch of the hazel" as would keep him warm for a run of, say, only two miles and a half. It might teach him a little fellow-feeling for the gentler "brute beasts" driven without food or water, frightened and terrified through the night, by the mobs of excited savages hunting the tortured herds along the hard roads, with heavy blows, ten and fifteen miles from their grazing grounds.

class hate can be used by a parish priest in a Mission Country, in which the religious authorities are armed with absolute and extraordinary powers for the maintenance of discipline, it needs no lengthy commentary to enable impartial observers to realise the deliberate policy of those ecclesiastical superiors. Priest, prelate, and politician are carrying out a policy of practical identity, the policy of the Compulsory Expropriation Board, and there is no room for surprise at the continuance of that Board being, as we can see, an object of the warmest aspirations of the Confiscation League.

In less conspicuous activity are to be found those priests who devote themselves to the diplomatic service of the leagues and lodges. These strange ministers of religion apply themselves to obtaining "without scandal" the submission of the victims. "I am sorry to say, Mr. Hurley, that the branch is very indignant at your keeping the grazing, or the farm, when you know very well that public opinion is against you. Just let me tell them that you have thought over the matter, and that you see the friendship of the people is worth more than a few acres or a herd of bullocks. This will be much better, Mr. Hurley, than bringing trouble on yourself and your family."

We have a specimen of this activity in the recent case of the boycotting of the Ormond Hunt in Tipperary. Because the Hunt would not exclude a couple of its members the Hunt itself was boycotted as well. The members pluckily preferred to end the Hunt rather than yield. But "the local priest" tried to arrange a surrender to the League in the usual way. A newspaper paragraph mentions the fact :

"As the result of the interference of the Shinrone branch of the United Irish League, the Ormond Hunt has now been finally dissolved. *A suggestion was made by the local priest* that an agreement might be arrived at if public guarantee were given by certain members of

the Hunt to surrender the grazing lands they hold at the expiry of one term of eleven months, but the Hunt could not entertain the proposal. The pack, consisting of forty couples of hounds, has been sold for £200, and the hunt horses have also been disposed of."

To inaugurate morality in the New Year, there appears in *The Catholic Young Man*, just to give the right tone to Irish youth, an article by Rev. Professor MacDonald, D.D., belonging to the Maynooth Professoriate, which is a dithyrambic glorification of the Religion of the Hazel. He compares the innocence of cattle driving with such deeds of the "Hypocrite English" as cutting off the head of King Charles I., and twits the Liberals with "objecting to the use in Ireland of the hazel switch!"

But it is needless here to multiply quotations. The Maynooth clergy in Ireland are thoroughly saturated with agrarian dishonesty, and the people know it too well to over-estimate the well-worn ruse of putting up a couple of bishops to give a show of temporary condemnation for the benefit of Mr. Birrell. As Mr. Stephen Gwynn, the accommodating Protestant M.P. for the Galway Sacristies, recently said: "It will serve you perhaps better to lay the hazel by until after Christmas, and perhaps a few months beyond that."

PART II.

PARTLY HISTORICAL.

“There has been a gradual decline since 1898 in the number of vessels, men, and boys despite the special efforts made by the Congested Districts Board.”

Irish Fisheries Report.

“The Congested Districts Board has been trying to create new industries for twenty years, and has failed in them all.”

Lord Dudley as Chairman of Commission.

“Parliament passes Acts ‘for the benefit of Ireland,’ and then, discovering Ireland worse than before, sets Royal Commissions to find out why, though knowing why already, and knowing also that the Royal Commissions will not find it out; and the Royal Commissions sit at Ireland’s expense not daring to ask for the truth of witnesses who dare not tell it, but reporting on the ‘evidence’ in piles of unreadable books to prepare for more Acts and more Commissions, while the Irish disappear as a race in the most progressive of the ages. Nothing is harder to find out than what everybody knows and nobody dares mention. . . .

“*The Royal Commission on Congestion, who have just finished sitting, illustrate the thing well.* They were commissioned to find out why the Congested Districts Board could not cure congestion, and the chief interests represented by them were theology, agitation, landlordism, and agrarian greed. There are priests’ men, agitators’ men, landlords’ men, and tenants’ men, also a few really trying to find the truth about congestion, in so far as the others let them; but the others are there, openly preventing the truth, unless it suits their purpose.”

*Mr. P. Kenny, author of “Economics for Irishmen”
witness before the Commission.*

UNSUCCESSFUL STATE SOCIALISM.—NOT CONGESTION BUT UNEMPLOYMENT.

To define my position and to prevent possible misrepresentation, I wish to say two things: first, that I should be happy if everybody in Ireland who wanted ten acres or fifty acres could get them; and secondly, that I am absolutely convinced that the whole of the unemployment and depopulation problem could be solved in Ireland by Irishmen without any resort to almsgiving boards or individuals either at home or abroad. But nothing but permanent injury can result to the country from the system of the so-called Congested Districts Board, which is merely a pseudo-paternal and pseudo-theocratic variety of unsuccessful State socialism, worked by intolerant political partisans with the collusion of a politico-sectarian ring in Dublin Castle, at the expense of the general taxpayers, who do not share its bounties, and who are excluded from its secrets. It is in fact an attempt to create a sort of Paraguay on Shannon, an Irish copy of the South American experiment in the maintenance of "tame Indians," colonies of *Indios mansos*, lay pauper settlements ruled by clerical directors; and it may be said to combine the spirit of Holy Obedience with the spirit of poor relief on the models of the Poplar Union.

The supreme object of the supreme promoters of this system in Ireland is to effect the redistribution of Irish property among the acolytes and retainers of the reverend and political Fathers, together with all the profits and advantages, social and financial, which must accrue in Ireland to the leaders of such a revolution. Provided that the clerical managers

profit for themselves and their superiors, it is for them a matter of entire indifference that the consequences have been, and must continue to be, ruinous to the nation, destructive of self-help, integrity, and independence, and at once productive of class hatred and public mendicancy and depopulation.

There are no congested districts in Ireland. The name is a lie intended to open a whole procession of subsidiary falsehoods. There is only too much room for everybody. It is not congestion of the population, but unemployment of the population, which is the matter with Ireland, largely the result of hindrances, almost amounting to prohibition, of employment, thrown by agitators, mainly clerical, in the way of the employing class, and creative of widespread disinclination to labour with honesty and efficiency on the part of a large proportion of the unemployed.

Instead of remedying these evils, the sham Congestion Board aggravates them by socialist and semi-socialist devices for the expenditure of other people's money on the one hand, and by direct and indirect pauperisation on the other. You can never elevate a population which learns from your policy that begging is more profitable, as well as more indolent, than the exertion of manliness and energy in the struggle for life. When, into the bargain, the socialist distribution of money and money's worth becomes the privilege of a political priesthood skilled in the overthrow of all rival classes of society, you produce a national situation that is almost incurable.

ON THE HISTORY OF THE SHAM CONGESTION MOVEMENT.

FOREIGN COMPETITION—POLICY OF UNDERCULTIVATION
—THE BUTT PARTY—WHY PARNELL STOLE AN
AMENDMENT—BOARD FAILURES.

I WAS present at the genesis of the sham congestion policy, and have followed its development to the present day. As member for Galway and Dungarvan in the Parliaments of 1874 and 1880, as member of the Council of the Irish Home Rule League under Mr. Butt, and Vice-President and Hon. Secretary of the Irish Home Rule Confederation in Great Britain, I was personally cognisant of all the circumstances in which the sham Congestion Board had its origin. I was aware that the Board was founded with no approval of the Irish parliamentary representatives. I claim to have made a special study of the economic questions involved at home and on the Continent. I repeatedly visited Ireland for the purpose of observing the working of the agrarian legislation and agitation, including the operations in the so-called congested districts. As I have said before, there are no congested districts. It is the want of employment and want of industry which are in question, and not over-population. Population is far more congested in a large number of town areas in Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Limerick, etc., and is certainly not less miserable. Why should the money of the general taxpayer be taken to improve the position of the labouring family in Mayo or Donegal, and why should nothing be done for labouring families cooped up in infinitely less space, with less air and less sanitation,

in the poor streets of Dublin or Limerick? Why should the taxpayer in Dublin or Limerick have his contributions expended upon far less poverty in Donegal and Mayo, when the utmost extremity of human misery is to be found in repulsive abundance at his own doors?

The fundamental objection to the Congested Districts Board is that it is an absolute falsehood; and this falsehood has coloured and aggravated with related inveracities the whole course of its being and influence. Even as regards the agricultural districts, the difficulty is above all an employment and labour difficulty. "Agricultural congested districts" are only the slum areas to which the labouring population has drifted, and, for want of remunerative employment, has sunk into a condition hardly better than the worst cases of unemployment and destitution in the poorest of town districts.

No doubt there is a reason for this growth of agricultural pauperism. There was huge political disfranchisement* at Catholic "Emancipation," naturally involving legislative neglect, for the disfranchised can seldom influence legislatures in which they are not represented. Indeed, legislative measures, such as the reckless promotion of foreign competition against products of the soil, have had a directly baneful effect here, as everywhere in Ireland. The foreign competition, supported by O'Connell, which discouraged home agriculture, at the same time discouraged the employment of agricultural labour. The evil was made worse when measures like the Gladstone Land Acts crippled the landed proprietors who were such large employers of labour, and simultaneously stimulated

* The disfranchisement of the Catholic popular electorate in 1829 was enormous. Out of 200,000 electors enfranchised in 1793 by the Irish Protestant Parliament, 175,000, or seven-eighths, were disfranchised by the "Catholic Relief" fraud of O'Connell 36 years afterwards.

the tenant class to curtail their employment of farm workers in connection with the Land League policy of farm deterioration. The tenant farmer who hoped to get his rent reduced 50 per cent. in the land courts by showing with copious inveracity that his farm had become 50 per cent. less valuable was certainly not in a frame of mind to encourage the employment of additional spademen and ploughmen, but rather the direct contrary. The thriving farm, kept in good heart and fertility by a dozen labourers, might scarcely appeal to the compassion of any land court whatever; but the same farm *covered with weeds, and baffling the scanty efforts of a couple of inefficient and dispirited workers*, was precisely the object which, as a thousand idiotic decisions proved, unfailingly moved the Land Commissioner to issue his ridiculous, but omnipotent, mandate of rent reduction. Between Free Trade, the impoverishment of landowners, and the deliberate under-cultivation and impoverishment of land there could not fail to be a vast addition to unemployment in Ireland. But congested districts there were nowhere. There was general poverty of the labouring class, and that can only be permanently met by a restored demand for labour. There are scores of thousands of half-worked or quarter-worked farms in Ireland to-day capable of employing not only all the ragged listless loafers of the so-called congested districts, but a far greater number, if they could be forthcoming to meet the demand of energetic and scientific agriculture, and if the energetic and scientific agriculture could itself be brought into existence to employ the agricultural labour.

The general and increasing diminution of agricultural employment is the constant and increasing obstacle to any real betterment of what is called the congested districts problem. What on earth is the national use of planting five hundred or a thousand "Congested Poard tenants" at a vast expenditure of

what is really public almsgiving, when ten times or thirty times that population drifts from the same districts across the Atlantic? Let us imagine that some bishop of the "Ancient Hibernian Order" has secured the planting of a thousand Congested Board tenants, at the cost of half a million pounds sterling of public money. Where is the profit to country or exchequer when, from precisely the same districts, *thirty thousand of the rural population has at the same time drifted to America?* A great many of the congested districts tenants also, as soon as they have saved or begged the price of their passage money, are perfectly certain to become emigrants as well. The policy of the Congested Districts Board is really a modern version of the tub of the Danaidæ, which, as fast as it was filled from the top, flowed away in holes and fissures in every quarter. The object of the directors of the Congested Districts Commission is to procure an ever larger supply of public money from the top.

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Probably the most injurious error contained in the phrase "congested districts" is the connected suggestion of "a local problem demanding a local solution." The difficulty is not local at all, but only a local effect of general or national causes which are moral and intellectual far more than material. A policy of habitual neglect, with spasmodic intervals of *legislation by rush* at Westminster, a programme of jobbery, ignorance, and inertia at Dublin, is not only driving into non-employment labourers of every kind, but has swollen the ranks of general misery by fresh multitudes of men deprived of previous occupations, too poor to emigrate, too destitute of political importance to attract the attention of statesmen in quest of a reputation. Of course there are local wants and local causes also. But dwarfing everything else, and overshadowing everything else, *the want of employment in*

its most general expression is the root of the evil which is most erroneously nicknamed congestion. A board which fancies that congestion is the enemy may provide some stepping-stones to America, but will never stem the tide of depopulation by more than a few isolated and disappearing units.

On the questions with which the Congested Districts Board professes to deal I may justly call myself a representative of the economic policy of the Irish national party of 1870—1880, the only open and free national party, which in a century has sought to represent all Ireland—Butt, King-Harman, Colthurst, John Martin, Joseph Ronayne, etc.—and their economic policy emphatically repudiated the very possibility of a *particular result of general evils* being curable by local remedies alone. The Butt party, in fact, had found a sort of local Congestion Board in existence, which administered a so-called Irish reproductive fund for the special benefit of a dozen counties, just as to-day; and straightway brought in a resolution, proposed by Mr. Synan, M.P. for Limerick, for the encouragement of fisheries on all the coasts of Ireland, *at the same time demanding the creation of a general reproductive loan fund for the encouragement of industries generally throughout all Ireland.* The want of employment, which misgovernment perpetuated in so many local industries, was felt to be merely a subdivision of a general evil; and the Butt party proposed to deal with it through general remedies above all. If a more intensive agriculture flourished, there would be a greater demand for farm hands. Fishing, weaving, a hundred handicrafts, required a national demand, and not local coddling. *The Butt party depended essentially for its success on the growth of goodwill among Irishmen, and the constant co-operation of classes, and the promotion of mutual welfare.* So practical and non-romantic a politician as Mr. McCarthy Downing,

M.P. for county Cork, was able to plan, with the cordial approval of landowners like King-Harman and O'Connor Don, great schemes of voluntary migration in which local landlords would indicate farms, and local farmers would offer employment, to industrious settlers from distant parishes or counties. Unfortunately, after the time of Butt a supreme object of legislation and agitation has been to encourage illwill, to drive class against class, and to make even the farmer dismiss his labourer in order that a deteriorated soil might claim a diminished rent from the Land Commission.

It is curiously instructive upon English government of Ireland to note how the Irish party thirty years ago obtained the passing of their resolution for a fisheries loan fund for all Ireland. The existing Government had of course resolved to reject the measure, because it purported to be a reform. On the night in question a hundred Government followers were dining in St. Stephen's Club, connected by wire with the Whips' office, and only two minutes' run from the division lobby. But a quick-witted Irish member, Mr. Philip Callan, representative of Louth, had meditated on the situation, and was prepared to turn it to account. Passing the word round the Irish party to be ready to take the division immediately, he deftly nipped the connecting wire with the bulk of the Government party. The division bell rang. The Whips looked in vain for the battalion from St. Stephen's Club. The resolution of the Irish party was passed by a narrow majority. Mr. Callan's ready ruse had prevailed.

It is said that the Government was preparing to ignore completely the resolution, when Mr. James Lowther and a band of good-humoured colleagues intervened on behalf of the Irishmen. "Callan," he declared, "had made a fair sporting move and neatly won the trick, and he should not be deprived of his

winnings." But the Government concession was merely nominal. The existing Reproductive Loan Fund, already far too limited and small for its actual objects, was by the Reproductive Loan Fund Act, 1874, made to be applicable also to the Irish fisheries! Not an additional penny was granted for industries of any kind! *The fiction of a local congested district in Ireland seems to have been invented at this time to excuse the refusal of the Government to consider the general wants of the country.* Local influences naturally supported a theory which promised local profits, and these local influences triumphed in the well-meaning Balfour policy of 1888—1890. More properly speaking, the triumph was not in, but over, the policy of Mr. Balfour. Mr. Balfour, during his Chief Secretaryship in Ireland, saw the expediency of a light railway system in the west, which might both grant transport facilities of the utmost necessity, and provide employment during their construction. Being naturally a man of warm human sympathies, sometimes disguised under a rather elaborate air of detachment and aloofness, Mr. Balfour was led or pushed somewhat beyond the light railway scheme, though never approaching the system of general disturbance, under the pretext of general helpfulness, which has since connoted the activities of the Congested Fiction Board.

It is difficult to narrate briefly the steps by which an undertaking that was meant to remove distress without provoking subversive cupidities became the agent and the instrument for unsettling society and confiscating property, into which it has developed in the hands of the clerico-Jacobin ascendancy. To the English Liberal party is really due the inception of this movement towards State socialism. Before the return of Mr. Balfour's party to power, in the Sessions of 1883—1884, what may be called the definite step towards combining Irish distress legislation

with party politics was inaugurated by the Gladstone Ministry.

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It was on the occasion of a Bill granting certain transport facilities in Ireland that Mr. O'Connor Power, M.P., saw the opportunity for giving notice of an amendment by which the moneys under the Bill might be partly applied to the establishment of colonies of migrated settlers, the assumption being that all distress in Ireland is due to scarcity of land instead of scarcity of industry. It was rather a twist in the scope of the Bill to introduce a migration question at all, and Mr. O'Connor Power's suggestion was about to be summarily disregarded, when a masterly idea struck some members of the Gladstone Government. "Why not accept the migration amendment, but give the credit of it to Parnell? If O'Connor Power gets the credit of such a popular move, it will do us no good whatever; if we give the credit to Parnell, it will be a brilliant feather in his cap in Ireland, and every consolidation of his authority will help us in the long run, as he stands pledged to us." Mr. Parnell, accordingly, received a communication from the Treasury Bench informing him that, *if he brought in the amendment*, it would be accepted by the Government; but if Mr. O'Connor Power did so, the Government would oppose it. "But how can I propose the amendment?" replied Mr. Parnell. "It is O'Connor Power's amendment. It is on the paper as such, and I cannot take it up." "Oh yes, you can," answered the Treasury Bench. "Put down the same amendment a line or a word earlier in the Bill. That will give you precedence; and we shall accept the amendment coming from you." On these exact terms the trick was played, to the furious indignation of Mr. O'Connor Power. His amendment was moved by Mr. Parnell a couple of lines earlier in the Bill; and

the Government accepted "Mr. Parnell's" statesmanlike suggestion for having "fifty thousand pounds devoted to an experiment in migration in Ireland." Mr. Parnell was encouraged to form a board, to which various Catholic bishops were parties, and the notorious Bodkin estate purchase—that expensive failure—was the result. This is really the initiation of what have come to be known as Congested Board purchases of estates for resettlement.

The Bodkin estate purchase was a dishonest, as well as a farcical, failure. Some of the Congested Board imitations have been much the same; but the most promising of them may be more fairly described as disastrous successes. They have largely been, as they were intended to be, *experiments in social disturbance and in the maintenance and extension of the clerico-Jacobin agitation against owners of landed estates.*

The full efficacy of the Congested Districts Board did not commence until Mr. John Morley's nomination of the Patron of the Ancient Hibernians and one of his most landlord-hating priests as members, and practically the dominant members, of the Board. I throw no doubt upon the convictions or sincerity of these reverend gentlemen; but, as will be seen, it was a ruinous measure to place the supreme distribution of public money, together with indefinite, which meant infinite, opportunities of social disturbance, in the power of partisans so potent in themselves, and so immeasurably more potent through their connection, under holy obedience, with the whole scheme of the Propaganda priesthood for establishing the domination of Churchmen upon the ruin or subjugation of every other class in the community.

Mr. T. M. Healy, M.P., in his most instructive pamphlet, "Why Ireland is not Free," published in 1898, explicitly states, as already mentioned, that the addition of this element to the Board was part of a vast plan of campaign imposed upon the complicity

or credulity of Mr. John Morley, Chief Secretary for Ireland during the year 1894. After mentioning a long list of "Mr. Dillon's principal lieutenants in the plan of campaign" who were then made salaried magistrates and resident magistrates, clerks of the Crown, and county court judges, Mr. Healy, M.P., proceeds to state: "As to honorary appointments, the Most Rev. Dr. O'Donnell was made a member of the Congested Districts Board. The Rev. Denis O'Hara, P.P., Mr. Dillon's chief supporter in the west, was also appointed one of its members." These reverend gentlemen are still members, and dominant members, of the Congested Districts Board. We have seen already that Father Denis O'Hara is entrusted with the special functions on the Board of "representative of agriculture"! The most reverend prelate himself, chief manager of Government distress relief as well as Patron of the Ancient Hibernians, Royal Commissioner on the Congested Districts Commission, treasurer of the League Parliamentary party, had been Chairman of the ominous League "Convention of the Irish Race" in 1896. At that convention the most reverend Chairman, supreme manager of the Congested Districts Board, etc., etc., proposed the resolution which pledged this convention, "representing the Irish people, to give its financial support to the Irish party." So intimate was the connection between an intolerant political party in Ireland and Mr. John Morley's nominee to the Congested Districts Board! Nobody questions the most reverend treasurer, etc., etc., as to his perfect right to convey the dollars of Mr. Patrick Ford into the war-chest of Mr. John Redmond; but where is the impartiality?

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Of course, there has been some return, or apparent return, for the vast amount of money which, during the

last fifteen years, has been transferred from the taxpayers to the protegees of the Congested Board. Houses have been built or rebuilt, thatched or slated; estates have been bought with or without pressure, and have been divided among old or new tenants; various branches of industry have been subsidised; the whole coast from Kerry to Donegal has been explored for possible fishing or yachting stations; quasi-fishing industries have been started, some to flourish and most to perish* ; railways have been built or extended, some with profit to the neighbourhood and some, it is said, for the more special convenience of the reverend clergy. There can be no doubt of the high intelligence and philanthropic zeal of many of the Board officials, even though they do not conceal their virtues in their courteous estimates of one another's efficiency. But the main fact remains, huge, startling, not to be dissimulated. Since the Board was sent upon its mission of politics and benevolence, the population of Ireland has dropped by another three-quarters of a million, *the half of which depopulation is to be traced to the areas operated by the Board.* In other words, the policy of local beneficence, without any

* The following summary of the last Irish Fisheries Report shows how complete is the failure of the Board in this domain also. Having omitted to notice the fact that, so long as the Irish are led to prefer alcohol and tannin tea to nourishing food, there is little use catching fish, the congested fictionists are proud to get threepence return from every shilling of outlay. If the Irish wanted to eat fish, and knew how to cook it, there would be no failure of fisheries, and no need to subsidise them. "The Government report on the sea and inland fisheries of Ireland shows that last year three of the four chief fishing seasons were disappointing, the total catch (exclusive of shellfish) being only 753,471 cwts., as against 998,206 cwts. in the previous year. The falling off was, save as regards haddock and unspecified fish, general, but was most serious in the case of mackerel. As regards the number of vessels, men, and boys, engaged in fishing on the Irish coast, there has been a *gradual decline since 1898*, despite the special efforts made by the Congested Districts Board to develop the fisheries."

intelligent regard to the general situation, has broken down as completely as could ever have been anticipated, even without counting the national losses of every kind involved in the policy of partisanship, favouritism, and class discrimination, to use no harsher word, which has accompanied the action of its most influential managers.

I shall return to the consideration of several sub-questions of the gravest order which belong to the consideration of this matter ; but here I have to put on record above all a renewed protest against the miserable and short-sighted theory that you can deal locally with the evils called by the deceptive name of "congestion," and that Donegal or Kerry is likely to increase in wealth and numbers while the general population of the country is passing uninterruptedly from poverty to exile. The Irish party under Mr. Butt never looked on any local remedies as more than palliatives of the situation, and considered that the misery in the waste places of Ireland was above all only a symptom of a universal malady. Without the union of classes they believed it impossible to heal that malady, and in the absence of that union and co-operation the most energetic of local nostrums must remain a fiasco.

THE FATAL CHANGE IN IRISH TILLAGE.

FROM TILLAGE FOR SUBSISTENCE TO TILLAGE FOR SALE—FROM NATIVE FOOD TO FOREIGN IMPORTS.

HERE I must touch, at least, that cause of diminished employment and diminished subsistence of the most wide-reaching kind, which has revolutionised, not for the better, the whole problem of living in Ireland, but which is practically ignored by almost all who deal with that problem. By this is meant *the Vital and Fatal Change which has substituted indirect subsistence for direct subsistence as the object of agricultural industry during the past century in Ireland.*

By Direct Subsistence is meant where the object of the tiller or cultivator is to raise food and other necessaries from his holding with the object of directly consuming such products on the holding by himself and by his dependants; by Indirect Subsistence is meant where the object of the cultivator is not to produce things for direct consumption on the holding, but *things which must be sold in near or distant markets* in order to obtain money to purchase the articles of consumption which have become customary on the holding. In the former case, let us say, a farmer by himself and his male and female labourers raises on the farm the principal articles of diet and clothing, the corn, the potatoes, the bacon, the wool and flax for garments, the milk, butter, and cheese, which clothe and feed, with little recourse to foreigners, the entire farmstead from year to year. Such a holding can be self-sufficing, no matter what the range of prices in near or distant markets. *The object of the farmer is not Sale, but Subsistence.* Under the other system, that of

indirect subsistence, the cultivator looks to his holding, not to feed and clothe directly him and his, but to produce something which, *when sold in the foreign market*, can obtain money with which the farmer can then buy—mostly in foreign markets—the commodities, meat, bread, tea, manufactured cloths, etc., requisite for his family.

In the case of direct subsistence native products are applied directly to native wants. Under indirect subsistence native products must first be exchanged in the foreign markets, *at prices affected by the competition of all the world*, for the money required to buy, *at similar competitive prices*, the products of foreign industry to supply domestic consumption.

It is literally impossible to exaggerate the influence of this economic revolution on the population, employment, self-support, and stability of comfort in Ireland, as in all countries in which a similar change, amounting to a practical subversion of economic life, has been introduced and has supplanted the ancient system. A century ago there were innumerable farms in Ireland upon which almost every article of food and clothing was produced on the spot, prepared for use on the spot or in the neighbourhood, and being intended for home consumption instead of outside sale, was practically unaffected by the range of prices and the influence of foreign markets. It is absolutely impossible to exaggerate the contrast between such a farm of the olden time and a farm of the later days. The milk, corn, potatoes, the bacon, the wool, and flannel, went directly to supply the wants of the men and women who grew and tended them. It was hardly necessary to send a five-pound note in the year out of the neighbourhood and out of the farm. The farmer had neither to pay his money to the tea-planters of Assam for tea, nor to the millers of Minneapolis for flour, nor to the spinners and weavers of Bradford for cloth. It was a matter of indifference to him whether

the product of his farm was worth a hundred pounds on the London market or only twenty-five pounds. He had no need to send it to the London market. It was consumed at home, where it was wanted. With good husbandry and intelligent government, such a land could defy famine as it defied foreign competition. The sack of potatoes and the bushel of wheat had exactly the same nutritive power for the support of the farmer and his helpers whether the price of the one and the other had gone up or had gone down 100 per cent. on Stock Exchanges a thousand miles away.

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I am intimately acquainted with the history of an old-time farm in Connaught during a hundred years. At the outset of that period the farm was cultivated for direct subsistence. The farmer employed many labourers and many female servants on his farm of two hundred acres. There was labour in abundance, and every inch of the two hundred acres was cultivated in one way or another. The corn and oats that were consumed in bread and cakes were grown upon the farm. So were the potatoes and the cabbages; so were the bacon and the eggs. Half the farm was under pasturage; and the cows and sheep supplied milk and butter, and wool and hides, for use, and not for commerce. There was no diminution of employment in winter, for in winter indoor work, both the work of women and the work of men, proceeded without interruption. It was a merry as well as an industrious scene in the huge room where stood the kitchen hearth. Twenty or thirty men and women labourers plied their tasks, which were lightened by story-telling and songs. When the big table was spread for meals, the farmer and his family had a white cloth laid at their end. It was almost the only distinction between the master and the servants. The wool that was spun was woven in the neighbourhood

or in the house. Flannel and frieze were produced at home or in the neighbourhood from the farmer's wool. The hides were sent to a tannery in the neighbouring town, and they or their equivalents came back in boots and shoes. There was the growing of flax and scutching of it, and the making of linen. At regular seasons travelling tailors and shirt-makers came round the farms and clad the inmates from the stuffs which the inmates had grown. There was little money paid in wages; but the wage in lodging and board, and clothing, and healthy industry, and friendly companionship was high according to every intelligent standard. The farmer and his family got only some clothes of superior cloth from distant markets at rare intervals for wear at church and festival.

The farmer brought home from the county town an occasional newspaper which told of the fall of Napoleon or the rise of O'Connell. There was not much difference between his children and his servants. Old William, the head labourer, had buried the farmer's father, and hoped to be buried by his son. A million of such homesteads, if they had not been destroyed by what is called progress, could have defied for ever depopulation and emigration. To-day upon that farm everything is changed. There is not one-tenth of the old employment for labour. The house is almost empty. The farmer gets everything he wears and everything he eats and drinks from the shops in the town, which in turn get their commodities from Leeds and Chicago and Assam. Everything that the farmer grows he has first to sell for what price he can get before he can pay to the Englishman and the American and the Anglo-Indian the cost of clothes, shirts, and flannels, and hosiery, and tinned meats, and poisonous tea, which his father never wanted, or produced at home. Where twenty human beings lived healthy lives, their three or four successors must pinch and pine to make ends barely

meet. Farming for direct subsistence nourished a populous Ireland, even though skill was rude and ignorance was manifold; farming to produce something which can be sold abroad to obtain what might be better produced at home has left Ireland bare of her inhabitants and a pauper before the world.

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A witness, Mr. Thomas Swan, miller and grain merchant, nominated to give evidence before the Congested Commission by the Moderator of the General Assembly, gave most significant evidence on the disastrous consequences to the population of Inishowen of the change of diet from the native food grown on the land to the imported food, if it can be called food, which has taken its place, very much as I have mentioned above. At the same time this intelligent witness indicates the public-house and what is called "home industry" as combining with bad food to produce depopulation and disease:—

A public-house should not be run in a congested area; but, if there at all, it would tend for the bettering of the condition of the people to have it run as a separate business, and in an entirely different house from any other business. Regarding food, the people should be encouraged to return in some measure to the oatmeal and wheaten porridge, eggs and milk, raised in their own farms. *These nourishing and cheap foods have been largely abandoned,* and in a lesser degree their own poultry and potatoes, in favour of Indian meal, fine flour, tea, and tinned manna from Packingtown. The result is apparent, and unless stopped soon the Inishowen man of the next generation will be half a foot shorter in stature, and have no teeth to speak of. For the shirt and like industries I advocate small factories through the districts for about forty or fifty workers each *as a substitute for work taken home.* A cheap building with one supervisor of work would suffice, and money might be lent to fit up such factories. The small country factory system develops fine healthy girls, *the home work of this class weak and sickly ones.*

Not long ago I saw a sight of disgust and horror which illustrated all the difference between that cultivation for Direct Subsistence under which the labourer

wore the wool shorn from the sheep of the farm, and woven in the house on the farm, and the modern system in which the labourers must often clothe themselves, according to the laws of price and purchase, from the fœtid shelves of a rag fair. An Irish doctor in the East End of London led me one day to see a storehouse of clothing for the Irish. In a filthy little square or yard, surrounded by overcrowded and decaying houses, a couple of merchants in that line of business had set up their enterprise. They bought the second-hand, the cast-off, clothes of the working classes. It was pence as often as shillings which represented the monetary value of the indescribable fabrics that were handed across the broad and dirty counters. The piles of abominable garments were in some cases subjected to a very summary process of much-needed fumigation, which could not, however, effect any considerable regeneration. Then they were made up in tight bundles packed in suitable receptacles, and sent over to Ireland to be sold to the farm labourer and the town artisan, instead of the clean strong suits of home-making which used to be grown, and woven, and cut, and sewn upon the farm, and by the hands of the farm occupants, in days before progress and before depopulation. Meantime in Irish huts and houses the girls brought up at the convent schools have learned to read the penny novel; they have forgotten knitting, and spinning, and stitching, and cutting, and fitting. When they are tired of moping away their lives in Ireland, they cross the ocean to work alongside of negroes in America.

These vital and fatal changes were possibly beneath the consideration of a Royal Commission appointed, in the intention of its authors, to transfer the lands of existing owners to the followers of the patrons of the Ribbon lodge. More probably those authors knew, or felt instinctively, that the trail would lead direct from the untaught, dependent peasants—who are the

product of the priest-managed schools—right to that omnipotent triad of the popular existence: the publican, the politician and the priest. The publican, in his various incarnations of spirit-grocer, loan-grocer, credit-grocer, credit-grocer-and-draper; the politician, mostly chosen from the ranks or the counters of the tea-and-whiskey men; the priest, filling his collection plates with the dirty coin of the publican, nominating and electing the ignorant servility of the politician. Here is the inseparable combination which inculcates on the peasant what he shall buy, and eat, and drink, and pay. Were the Irish farmers to return again to growing on their own fields what they eat and wear, if the Irish farmers even began to learn once more that they ought to live on, and from, their land instead of paying ruinous credit-prices for the foreign stuff which fills the shelves of the gombeen man; where would be the gains of the credit-shop? Where would be the salary of the agitator? Where would be the collections of the politician-priest, the cathedral-building, convent-building, villa-building, shareholding politician-priest?

Sir Horace Plunkett, as we shall briefly have to notice, has been made to suffer the penalty of trying to teach the Irish farmer to feed himself and his family without paying that ruinous toll, that ruinous usury, to the ally and paymaster of the politician and the priest. Sir Horace Plunkett has been dismissed for trying to stop the thieving of the gombeen men, and his dismissal has been the work of the British Government in order to conciliate the votes of the Parliamentary nominees of gombeen man and priest. Session after session Mr. John Dillon had demanded his head, and Mr. John Dillon is M.P. for the Congested Board; M.P. for the favoured electors of East Mayo who have had spent upon them Five Hundred Thousands Sterling of the money of the general taxpayers. Mr. John Dillon has a safe seat under the

ægis of that munificent poor-box, under the ægis of "his principal supporters in the West." Is there an English constituency where "the principal supporters" of the sitting member are authorised to spend Five Hundred Thousands Sterling of public money among his electors?

POSTSCRIPT.

If we are to credit the statement of that luminary of the cattle drivers, Mr. Stephen Gwynn, M.P. for the Galway Sacristies, Mr. John Dillon is not only the protegee of the Congested Board in East Mayo but the author of Mr. Birrell's expected Bill for placing the University education of the Irish Catholic laity under the heel of the venerable congeners of Mr. Dillon's "chief supporters in the West." In the course of a violent assault of oratory upon the Irish Judge who checked Mr. Ginnell's cattle driving by temporary seclusion, Mr. Ginnell's admiring colleague revealed the identity of Mr. Birrell's teacher. I quote from the public Press of January 14:—

"Yesterday Mr. Stephen Gwynn, M.P. was the principal speaker at a Nationalist meeting which was held at Nenagh, county Tipperary. Speaking of the Irish University question, Mr. Gwynn said that at the present moment, so far as they knew, the scheme which Mr. Bryce and Sir Antony MacDonnell had proposed was being dropped, and instead *there was being taken up a scheme which was in the first instance proposed by Mr. John Dillon.*"

What are Mr. John Dillon's qualifications? Doubtless the same which obtain him the support of Father Denis O'Hara and the Bishop of the Board.

Notes and Illustrations.]

TO-DAY THE IRISH BUY AND STARVE; THEIR FATHERS GREW AND FED.

TESTIMONY OF BISHOP O'DWYER, OF LIMERICK.

MY conviction that the disastrous revolution in Irish farming, which has substituted tillage for markets in the place of tillage for subsistence, is the cause beyond comparison of Ireland's present agricultural ruin, has just been confirmed by a narrative in a speech by the Most Rev. Dr. O'Dwyer, Bishop of Limerick. Premising that what he was about to relate had been told him a few years ago by a gentleman of position and ability, who lamented the changed habits of farmers since he was a boy, Bishop O'Dwyer proceeded to say:—

He told me that when he was a lad, in the house of his father, who was a farmer, *every article of clothing worn by members of the family was made under their own roof.* They spun and carded their own wool. They got it dyed, and the women did all the manufacturing—the tailoring part of the business—and supplied the clothes for themselves and for their husbands, and they were perfectly satisfied with plain, good clothes that they were able to make themselves. *Not only that, but every bit of food that was consumed in that house was produced on their own land.* They grew their own patch of wheat, and dried it in great large bins at their own kitchen fires. They had it ground in querns by the men, and the housewives baked it and made wholesome bread, infinitely more wholesome than the very fine flour that they were getting from the best mills in England at the present time. They killed their own pigs, made their own bacon, and ate it. They had their own milk and butter, so that *nothing went out of the house except the rent.* It would be very easy to calculate roughly what was the annual value of all the clothing and food of an average family, and then multiply it by six or seven hundred thousand to see the sum total of millions that were remaining in Ireland, every shilling of which now is flowing away.

Unquestionably free alien trade has deprived the Irish farmer of profitable markets, but the market of markets of which he deprived himself was the supply of subsistence and clothing to his own family from the produce of his own farm. No fluctuation of outside prices could touch that. But the Irish farmer, a million Irish farmers, preferred to forget the wants of their own homes in order to try unskilfully and slothfully to supply the wants of foreign homes which got better supplies elsewhere. Then the Irish farmer, supported by Congested Boards and suchlike idiocies, bawled and bellowed: "The landlords are ruining me."

EVIDENCE OF A RATHLIN PRIEST.

A most conclusive corroboration of the same fact came, quite unwittingly, from a witness before the Commission, Rev. Father McGowan, administrator of Rathlin Island. He wanted the Commission to get his poor people all sorts of things, and let slip that their trouble only came from omitting to work for themselves like their own fathers! *Evidence, VII. 43.*

REV. FATHER MCGOWAN—The population of Rathlin Island in 1841 was 1,010; now it is only 368. . . . I believe that in former times, when the population was three times what it is now, the people provided themselves with every article of clothing, *while at present they must buy all these things.* Also, in the old days they cultivated every available spot in the island, and to this day you will see traces of cultivation even to the tops of the hills. . . . Now the land has gone largely from tillage to grass. . . . In the old times they had many cottage industries, and were able to make their own clothes, and even the shoes that they wore on their feet.

There are the fruits of the priest-managed school, and the agrarian agitation, and the general loafing and idling which mark these later days. Instead of growing and eating and wearing the produce of the fertile Irish soil, they must buy the black tea from India, and the white flour from America, and shoes

from Northampton and Boston, and the shoddy coats and trousers and skirts and petticoats from Manchester slopshops and the rag fairs of London. Let them bend their backs to the spade and their fingers to the loom, as their fathers and mothers did, as tens of millions of European farmers and peasants do, and there will be little misery in Ireland.

BISHOP O'DONNELL'S ADMISSIONS.

There are many indications through the evidence of the change from home-produced articles to alien importations. The Irish peasant is starved and ill clad because he has ceased to grow what he can eat and wear.

The delegate of the League in North Sligo, Mr. Quilty, dropped precious information upon the change in this respect within his own knowledge:—

Fifty years ago garden chairs, cradles, etc., were woven here from the osiers which grow plentifully. The little industry is killed. Earthenware crocks, milkpans, etc., were manufactured here. Doormats woven from bent grass were hawked in the streets of Sligo. I never see any now. At the market gate you would see men and women selling large rolls of flannel manufactured by themselves, worth six times the flimsy stuff sold in the shops. They have disappeared.

Rev. Father James Clancy, a Clare priest, gave astounding instances of the neglect of the Congested Board peasants to grow food either for themselves or for the neighbouring market:—

I may mention one instance of a deplorable fact. I know a man in this neighbourhood who sells large quantities of potatoes to farmers! I think it is an appalling thing that farmers who have land should pay 5*d.* and 6*d.* a stone for potatoes when they might have grown potatoes for themselves. . . . In Kilkee, a popular watering-place, there is a great market for agricultural produce, potatoes, eggs, butter, and all kinds of table vegetables; but unfortunately the people around Kilkee do not attend to supplying the wants of the 6,000 or 7,000 visitors who are in Kilkee in July, August, and September.

But the climax is reached when the Bishop of the Board himself in questioning a witness, Mr. Peter McCullagh, from Tyrone, quite admits that he is aware that exotic food is worse as well as dearer for the farmer :—

MR. P. McCULLAGH—The cost of living is more expensive now because they used to use what they raised upon the farm themselves.

MOST REV. DR. O'DONNELL—Do you not think that forty years ago the food of the people was as substantial as it is now; . . . that it was as good for a healthy farmer; . . . that it was perhaps better?

WITNESS—Yes. . . . The food is more expensive now. . . . It takes away the money.

The slothful peasants double the cost of living by dear, unhealthy, imported food; and the Congested Board says the remedy is to rob the landowners and the graziers!

PART III.

HIRUDO HIERATICA.



THE HUGE AND INSATIABLE EXACTIONS OF THE POLITICAL CHURCH.

“’Mid the village, poor and sordid,
’Mid the flock, unfed, unlettered,
Rose the fane, more Goth than Gothic,
Fettered taste, and waste unfettered.

“ Foreign art and Irish money,
Tens of thousands, golden pieces ;
’Mid the wreck of folk and country,
Pauper flocks have fertile fleeces.”

“ The splendid newly built Catholic church, the well-built convent, now and then the Bishop’s palace, rise among the wretched cabins of some of the poorest people in the world.”

British Medical Journal, March 26th, 1904.

“ Nothing is more firmly fixed in the minds of many shopkeepers and their peasant customers than that the prosperity or destruction of their business is at the will of the priest. . . . A priest says in a ‘sermon’ about the Christmas collection: ‘*If I find anyone who does not pay, I’ll take care he is exposed.*’ . . . When a person in the family has money, and grows old, the priest often becomes lawyer to him as well as spiritual adviser. . . . I know even wealthy families whose ordinary affairs of business are directed every day by priests against their own will and judgment, so complete is the organised terror.”

The Irish Catholic author of “Economics for Irishmen.”

It must not be thought that Donegal and Kerry are exceptional in the boast of congestion cathedrals.

The expensive megalomania of the clergy shows everywhere. In the wretched village of Roscommon, capital of cattle-driving, they have built a pompous church for £80,000, blazing with gold and mosaic—£80,000 for less than 2,000 parishioners! A recent correspondent of the *Standard* has noticed its cruel contrast with surrounding misery and ignorance:—

The morning rose fine on Roscommon, and I saw an ugly church. *that lately cost £80,000*, looking down on decay and dirt, with the old church, much less ugly, standing useless in the middle of the miserable town. The population is 1,891!

Much of the Irish money for these gaudy edifices goes to Italian and German purveyors of “ecclesiastical art,” supported by the spiritual authorities at Rome.

A BLOATED CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT — THE EXAGGERATED EPISCOPATE — CONVENTUAL LEECHES.

COMPARISON WITH FOREIGN CATHOLIC ESTABLISHMENTS—PALATIAL CHURCHES AND PAUPER FLOCKS—CONVENT BEGGING LETTERWRITERS—WHY THE MONEY GOES ABROAD—CHURCH DECORATION AND CLERICAL COMMISSIONS.

THERE is a source of Irish poverty and pauperisation which is probably the main source of all, but which, as a matter of course, the Royal Commissioners have been led by their directors and guides to avoid with more care and anxiety than any other cause of the public misfortune. I refer to the overgrown, the prodigious, the astounding and intolerable extent and increase of the Catholic ecclesiastical establishment, which, especially in recent years, has out-Heroded beyond all comparison any evils which were imputed to the Protestant Church previous to its disestablishment and disendowment. While the general population of Ireland has been going down by leaps and bounds towards the abyss, the clerical population has been mounting by cent. per cent. within the same period.

The public opinion of other countries at least makes no secret of these facts of the Irish clerical situation. They have got into foreign parliaments, and have figured in the replies of responsible Ministers. A short time ago, when an Austrian Cabinet was being heckled by some anti-clerical opponents upon its alleged encouragement of an excessive number of clerical persons in Austria, the Minister replied: "If you want to know what an excessive number of the clergy

is like, go to Ireland. In proportion to their population the Irish have got ten priests and nuns to the one who exists in Austria. I do not prejudge the question. They may be wanted in Ireland. But let not honourable members talk about over-clericalism in Austria until they have studied the clerical statistics of Ireland." A Jesuit visitor to Ireland, on returning to his English acquaintances and being asked how did he find the priests in Ireland, replied: "The priests in Ireland! There is nobody but priests in Ireland. Over there they are treading upon one another's heels." While the population of Ireland has diminished one-half, the population of the presbyteries and convents has multiplied threefold or more.

If we compare the Catholic Church establishment in Ireland—even the permanent system and framework—with such establishments in other Catholic countries, the results will be amazing to the average Irishman.

There are in Ireland some 3,000,000 Catholics, and at the present rate of emigration and decay there will be soon far less. For this small handful there are no less than four archbishops, says the "Statesman's Year-book," and twenty-three bishops, besides a bishop auxiliary.

If we cross the water to Belgium, we find a population of 7,000,000 Catholics, that is to say, far more than double the Catholic population of Ireland. For these 7,000,000, however, there are in Belgium only one archbishop and five bishops. If Belgium were staffed with prelates in proportion to its Catholic population, on the Irish scale it should have nine or ten archbishops and some sixty bishops.

Alongside of Belgium lies the German empire, with 21,000,000 Catholics, or seven times the Catholic population of Ireland. In the whole of Germany there are five Catholic archbishops and twenty bishops. If the German Catholics were to have archbishops and

bishops on the scale of Ireland, they would have twenty-eight of the former and a hundred and sixty-eight of the latter, instead of the total of twenty-five archbishops and bishops who form the total episcopate of the great German Catholic Church. If we take a particular German state which is Catholic as Ireland is Catholic, Bavaria is a satisfactory example. It has a population of nearly 5,000,000 Catholics, or nearly two-thirds more than Ireland; but Bavaria has only two archbishops and six bishops. If the Bavarian episcopate were staffed on the scale of Ireland, it should have six archbishops and forty bishops.

I shall conclude with the great Catholic empire of Austria-Hungary, with a Catholic population of over 36,000,000. There are eleven archbishops in Austria-Hungary and forty bishops. I take my figures from the "Annuario Ecclesiastico." If rich and powerful Austria-Hungary was staffed with prelates on the magnificent scale of ruined Ireland, it should have forty-eight archbishops and two hundred and eighty-eight bishops. Belgium, Germany, and Austria-Hungary are great, rich, flourishing, and progressive Catholic countries; Ireland is a disappearing community, depopulated and pauperised, and is burdened with a Church establishment from four to eight times above the ratio in those successful and improving countries.

This enormous population of Churchmen, far beyond the necessities and even the luxuries of religious worship and service, would be a heavy tax upon the resources of great and wealthy lands. What must it be for Ireland to have to supply the episcopal villas, and new cathedrals, and handsome presbyteries, and handsome incomes of this enormous and increasing host of reverend gentlemen, who, as regards five-sixths of their number, contribute neither to the spiritual nor temporal felicity of the island?

Here is the reason why the ranks of the political priesthood are so populous in Ireland; here is the reason why that priesthood in Ireland seeks to monopolise every post and profession in public and private life to which an emolument is attached and from which a layman can be excluded. They are the despotic managers of all primary schools, and can exact what homage they choose from the poor serf-teachers whom they nominate, and whom they keep eternally under their thumb. They absolutely own and control all the secondary schools, with all their private profits and all their Government grants.* In the university what they do not dominate they mutilate. Every appointment, from dispensary doctors to members of Parliament, must acknowledge their ownership and pay toll to their despotism. The county councils must contribute patronage according to their indications; the parish committees of the congested districts supplement their pocket-money. They have annexed the revenues of the industrial schools. They are engaged in transforming the universal proprietary of Ireland in order to add material for their exactions from the living and the moribund.

Of course the Royal Ribbon Commission has not inquired into this vast source of aggravation of Irish poverty. Yet I am told that not less than £5,000,000 sterling are lifted from the Irish people every year by the innumerable agencies of clerical suction which are at work upon all parts of the Irish body politic and social. Nor can it be forgotten that the material loss is only a portion of the injury. The browbeaten and intimidated condition of the popular action and

* Mr. Birrell, the Chief Secretary, recently declared that "the system" in these Clerical Schools "is repulsive," consisting, "not in educating their pupils but in turning them into paying machines" for the Clerical School proprietors. In other words, a gigantic and criminal fraud.

intelligence, which is necessary to this state of things, necessarily communicates its want of will and energy to every department and every function of the community.

I have referred to the instructive spectacle presented by that enormous pile of ecclesiastical buildings in the little hamlet of Letterkenny, in Donegal, the cathedral worthy of a metropolis, the huge ecclesiastical college. Much the larger part of £100,000 sterling has been expended upon those costly edifices on the very brink and edge of the congested districts of a pauperised and depopulated county, whose pauperisation and depopulation are increasing from year to year. The Most Rev. Dr. O'Donnell, the Bishop of the Congested Board, is the chief pastor and chief everything else in Donegal. Since he became chief dispenser of the public funds in Donegal he has been enabled to construct that palatial pile of clerical structures. I do not presume to blame the Bishop of the Board for accepting from the people the contributions which raised that metropolitan cathedral in that petty town. With his ideas, his training, and his sense of duty to his ecclesiastical superiors, it has never seemed even incongruous to him that the population to whom he is a sort of Government providence, scattering the public wealth, should repay him for his generosity by aiding him to erect those costly structures of episcopal ostentation. It seems to him most natural. I am sure that he feels as entirely justified by his conscience in accepting that voluntary tithe from the beneficiaries of the Congested Fund as the most zealous priest or monk who takes from a dying man rich legacies for pious uses. But I have not to deal with the devout conscience of the Bishop of the Board. Looking at the matter merely from the economic point of view, what an addition it is to the burdens of those impoverished districts that a population which almost lives on the pauper grants from

public bounty should be led to contribute to their Church establishment the huge sums involved in the erection of Letterkenny Cathedral and its annexes!

But there is nothing unusual or irregular whatever, from the Irish clerical point of view, in expending enormous sums of the people's contribution in edifices and constructions whose magnificence is so painfully out of keeping with those thousands of insanitary hovels and those school buildings, ill built and ill kept, where the starving children acquire ignorance and tuberculosis. A centre of pauperism, a congested district, to use official fiction, not much less miserable than Donegal, is the county of Kerry. Yet in Kerry, as in Donegal, the local Bishop has no hesitation about appealing for subscriptions to a cathedral at Killarney which the zealous prelate declares to be, or to promise to be, "one of the most beautiful cathedrals built in modern times in the United Kingdom, and perhaps the greatest work of the greatest architect of the nineteenth century." Here again the inflated scale of the Church establishment in Ireland, even in the centre of pauperised regions scheduled by the Congested Board, comes into the same painful prominence as in Donegal. The Kerry Bishop—I quote from the *Tablet* of the 17th August last—states that he has appealed to the people of Killarney, and that "their response was liberal, if possible, beyond their means." The Bishop next turns to the people of Tralee, a town which is surrounded by misery, and similarly urges the population of Tralee to complete the cathedral according to the noble ideals of the great architect who designed it.

Far be it from me to undervalue the importance of a sufficient staff of ministers of the Gospel in any country, or to undervalue the necessity of adequate and becoming structures for public worship. But there is a distinction between abundance and reckless

extravagance, between dignity and megalomania. The poorest country in Europe has from four to ten times as many prelates as are to be found in the regions of the greatest wealth and prosperity; and Irish counties, so miserable as to be on the chronic lists of public charity for the last quarter of a century, might surely be allowed to worship God in edifices less magnificent and ostentatious than "the most beautiful cathedrals built in modern times in the United Kingdom, and perhaps the greatest work of the greatest architect of the nineteenth century."

The people asked for bread, and the priests gave them mountains of cut stones. Let it be always borne in mind that the priests and prelates who exact such huge sums for the construction of these pompous buildings never have any hesitation about appealing at the same time to Government, to the Congested Board, to public and private charity, for sums of money, a constant stream of money, "to save the people from starvation," in the very districts which are the theatre of this lamentable extravagance. It is a side issue, but a side issue full of serious instruction, that the excellent Kerry Bishop—his name is Most Rev. Dr. Mangan, I believe—announced that for his cathedral he had also "appealed to the priests of the diocese, and I am pleased to say that my appeal received a response generous and far away from my most sanguine expectations." In other words, the needy population of congested Kerry were called upon to pay twice over for the same clerical object. They have first to pay in response to the direct appeal of the Bishop addressed to the laity in every newspaper and from every pulpit in Kerry; but they have also to pay indirectly through the priests of the parish, as the Bishop requires contributions from the priests, and the purse of the priests is only filled by depleting the purse of the laity.

The arbitrary position of Ireland, as a region under

the Foreign Missions Congregation and outside of the canon law, makes an appeal of a bishop to his priests far more irresistible and crushing than in any national Church which has traditional and historic rights. The jurisdiction and power of a bishop over his priests in a mission country, like Ireland or Zululand, are practically boundless and absolutely appalling. "Thus a bishop has power to suspend any priest, and even a parish priest, without giving any reason for the suspension." If the reader wishes to know what this sentence of suspension implies, he can learn it from the following regulations made by the Congregation of Propaganda on the 20th October, 1884, which laid down—“(1) that suspension prevents an ecclesiastic from the exercise of his ecclesiastical order, rank, or dignity; (2) that no judicial forms need be observed in the infliction of this penalty, nor need canonical warnings precede it; (3) no tribunal may entertain any appeal against this suspension.” In other words, the Irish priest whom an Irish bishop has seen cause to suspend—a cause which need be visible to his own eyes alone—can be handed over to absolute ruin in case his submission is not deemed to be sufficiently complete, and he need not even be told for what he has to make submission!

Were an Irish priest to be insufficiently active in turning the financial screw upon his congregation when a demand for money comes from his bishop—and the bishop may be a mere instrument also—what a terrible future may be before him! On every public question the procedure can be the same. From the highest to the lowest the Foreign Mission Church in Ireland can be the most ruthless machine of extortion and intimidation which has ever been contrived in the most iron rules of ecclesiastical organisations. And the bishops themselves are as subject to their foreign masters in the Propaganda as the priests of a mission district are to their bishops and vicars apostolic.

When, in addition to all the demands which come from abroad, the Church in Ireland itself is overstaffed with such an unnecessary multitude of persons requiring a superior scale of raiment, food, and housing, then we have at once an explanation of the clerical quest of money, bleeding Ireland white, which is such a potent cause of public and private destitution and impoverishment.

As I wrote in a public letter to the Ulster Press :
“ If clerical competition hits the poorest poor, clerical begging and extortion are the terror of all who have made a little money. To support the Church, and to support it well, is the just pride of every Catholic. But these interminable extortions, on every pretext or without pretext at all, the perpetual collections, the meanly simoniacal fees for almost every sacrament, the battenning on the grief of the bereaved, the wresting of the last shilling before the priest will accord the decencies of the burial rite—these are grievances which are fiercely denounced wherever half a dozen laymen meet together, but which are not mentioned by intending members of Parliament. And then there is the terror of every family that, when the head of the house lies at death’s border, the solemn adjuration of the ghostly comforter, the solemn advice of the spiritual adviser, in the last awful hour of tottering reason, may whisk away from child and relative a larger and larger portion of the family patrimony.

“ There is no account ever rendered for the enormous sums annually extorted from the Irish laity, but they form an appreciable aggravation of the struggle for existence. Who ever hears of public benefactors among the Catholic Irish ? What funds for public education, what endowments of poor scholars, what grants for free libraries, what openings of social institutions, can ever be set to the credit of the wealthy Irishman in his dying hour ?

“There is an omnipotent adviser at the swooning creature’s pillow, and the service of man is never allowed to thwart the clutch of the hidden hand. Go into any Irish town. Question the local gossips on the rich people who died for the last score of years. ‘And what did they do for the old town?’ ‘Begorra, they built three convents, and they’ll soon finish the fine houses for the clergy, and they gave a power of money to the bishop.’ But not a penny for the promotion of lay industry, for the uplifting of the bright young lads and lasses who might be the wealth of Ireland, but who must emigrate if they are ever to be anything.”

Yet the cost, the enormous cost, of the Irish clerical establishment to the Irish nation is not allowed to enter into the scope of inquiry of a Royal Commission for inquiry into the poverty of Ireland!!

* * * * *

I think I ought to give a specimen of the begging letters which issue in hundreds of thousands every year, in millions more probably, from the clerical and conventual establishments from one end of the country to the other. Here is a copy of an ordinary begging letter, one of hundreds which have come to me from convents and presbyteries in Ireland. It is well worth most careful perusal and reflection, explaining as it does how deeply rooted must be the habits of mendicancy which such examples spread throughout the population. I merely omit here the name of the particular convent, while preserving the original letter:—

Convent of Mercy,
—, Ireland.

Dear Sir,—May I ask as a great favour if you would be so very good and kind as to send us a donation in aid of our convent and good works. *Owing to the enormous expense of a new addition to our convent, for which we are in debt*, we are greatly in need of aid in our many very pressing wants. *Knowing how very, very good you are, dear Sir*, I thought of writing, feeling you will not refuse

us an alms in the name of the Lord Jesus for His little ones and poor, whose fervent prayers, with those of our Sisters, will be many times daily offered for God's choicest blessings for you and yours, and on all your undertakings.

With many apologies for troubling you, dear Sir, but our pending need obliges me, and *your noble mind and kind, generous heart are my encouragement and assurance* it will not be in vain, especially as it is my *first and last* time to trespass thus, *most earnestly* requesting a favourable reply,

I remain, dear Sir,

Very sincerely yours in our Lord,

SISTER M. MAGDALEN.

P.S.—May I again most *earnestly request* you will not refuse, dear Sir, and may Jesus, for whose love I ask, *and to whom you give*, reward you, as I know He assuredly will. *No matter how small* anything you may be so very good and kind as to send, it will be a help, and meet with our deepest gratitude. Please do not disappoint us now, dear Sir, and many are the prayers that will daily ascend to the great white throne for God's choicest blessings for you. We are in such exceeding need of aid, that an early reply, if not inconvenient, would greatly enhance the value of your kind gift. Our good and generous Lord and Master, to whom you only *lend*, will Himself recompense you *even before the end of the month.*"

When we reflect that in every convent in the country there is a roomful of young women, novices and others, engaged in writing, under holy obedience, cadging appeals of this description from morning till night all the year round, and when we remember that it is these convents which educate, with few exceptions, the whole of the young girls of Ireland, it will be acknowledged that we are paying a heavy price for the exaggeration of our Church establishment. No professional beggar known to the Charity Organisation Society could produce a more abject epistle. "Knowing how very, very good you are, dear Sir," is written wholesale to thousands and tens of thousands. And what can exceed the gross irreverence of the concluding promise that if you send the very smallest donation "our good and generous Lord and Master will Himself recompense you *even before the end of the month?*" When such are the excesses of whining pertinacity which are the mark of our educational

institutions, how can the sentiments of independence, industry, and decent pride survive in the pupils of such teachers ?

Let us not blame too severely either the individual writers or their immediate superiors. They are only set the task by higher authorities. Just as the financial screw is turned upon the local priest to force him to become, even though unwilling, the extortioner of his congregation, so all those begging and whining convents must send a heavy commission on their gains to religious authorities outside of the country. There is no limit to the extortion under such a system except the limit of human endurance and life itself. The existence of an Irish layman or laywoman under the exactions of these harpies resembles that of the inhabitants in Eastern despotisms, whose only protection against exorbitant demands is to hide the possession of everything of value. Ireland is still "a country before the Reformation"; and the abuses which have been sternly checked by the Catholic Governments of Catholic lands, flourish without restraint, as in the England or the Italy of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Might I commend the epistolary style of the foregoing communication to the parish committees and similar leeches of the Congested Districts Board ?

A few years ago the protest made by a young priest, Father O'Donovan, at a meeting of what we may call the Maynooth Old Boys' Union, excited widespread attention. It was directed against the preposterous extravagance of the millions expended by the church-building clergy upon the foreign purchase of "decorations" for the edifices in construction. The sting of the complaint lay in payment of such vast sums to all sorts of foreign contractors for all kinds of ecclesiastical gewgaws in so-called statuary and painting, stained glass, frescoes, stuccoes, brass, and gildings. I may quote the *Dublin Evening*

Herald of the 8th July, 1901, as an indication of Irish public sentiment: "As for Father O'Donovan's address, it is too soon to say that the seed has fallen on barren places. If the wisest men are those who judge the future by the past, then to be wise is to predict that all is barren from Cloyne to Armagh. Fearless was this young priest's indictment of his superiors, absolutely fearless. Nothing did he say that has not been said over and over again in this and other Dublin newspapers; but the truth was brought to the doorstep at Maynooth, and there was no excuse not to hear and not to heed. The employment given to workers in various departments of art and manufacture through church-building and decoration could and should mean *an annual turn-over of nearly a million of money. How much of this sum goes away in drafts to foreign countries?* Every penny subscribed to funds for erecting churches, building towers and steeples, putting up stained glass and marble pillars, is subscribed by a faithful but poor people. To foster and develop Continental industries with these funds is as bad as—well, as Father O'Donovan makes out."

When the Congested Commissioners were looking all round Ireland for a means to encourage industry, and were listening to all those political priests and monsignors who wanted "only a little more" of the public money in order to raise new Birminghams under every parish committee, it did not occur to any of those reverend witnesses to speak, it certainly did not happen to the Commissioners to inquire, about what fine employers the Irish clerical patriots are—in foreign parts far from Ireland. I remember a successful fancy fair of a particularly pious character which was said to have netted some £30,000, and which was followed by loads of Italian marble and companies of Italian workmen. It was like that other bishop who relieved Irish distress by getting places as "teachers under the Board" for two

dozen. Whom? Poor Irish governesses? Certainly not. German and Belgian nuns!

It may be added, if hundreds of thousands of pounds of Irish money went to all kinds of ecclesiastical furnishing companies in Italy and Bavaria, it has never been doubted that the successful, and frequently Semite, contractors beyond the Rhine and Po had abundantly greased the palms of prominent clergymen who had in their disposal the "placing of the orders." An Irish architect, who had built many churches, was accustomed to say that he had to pay heavier "commissions" on such clerical orders than in any other branch of his business.* There is no public superintendence, no rendering of accounts to the laity, upon all those hundreds of thousands and all those millions of pounds. But the political priests still want money, money, private money, public money, "for the encouragement of Irish industry," to be encouraged, of course, by their own special, peculiar, particular, and patented "Parish Committees and Company."

* Of course the Commission, the arranged, hoodwinked, blind-folded, nose-led Commission, was not brought into contact with such realities of Irish clerical life. The priests on the Commission had never heard of them; the priests outside the Commission felt it was no business of theirs to spoil sport. The air of the Commission was not exactly healthy for independent testimony. As the author of "Economics for Irishmen" writes of a man who offered independent testimony, "Bishop O'Donnell wants to know, 'Why does not Mr. Jordan come here before the Commission himself?' When we consider the treatment of myself by the Commission, and of Mr. Jordan by his neighbours under clerical influence, is it any wonder that people are afraid to 'come here before the Commission' and tell the truth?"

As I say, it could not occur to the Commission to ask for a return of all the millions sterling spent upon ecclesiastical industry for Ireland during the last twenty years alone, *but not spent in Ireland*. The Commissioners were, perhaps, too deeply absorbed in fresh schemes for founding convent factories by immigrant Belgians, Germans, French, Italians, etc., where the young Irish lacemakers can lose their sight for six shillings a week.

THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE CLERICAL GRAB.

TECHNICAL AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS — DIRT AND HUNGER IN THE SCHOOLS—GRABBING THE LOCAL BOARDS.

I REFERRED in a former chapter to the wholesale campaign that is now being carried on, with the ignorant connivance of the miserable administrators of the new local government, for the purpose of seizing all the technical education funds for clerical communities of one variety or another. Just as in ordinary schools, the lay element is almost boycotted. But it must not be forgotten that the immense, the enormous, industrial school grab preceded long ago this latest development of clerical acquisitiveness.

More than a generation ago the Imperial Parliament granted nearly £200,000 a year for the industrial, technical, and agricultural training of the poorest and most helpless class of Irish children, all the homeless waifs, all the poor little mendicants, of street and lane—£200,000 a year!

On every imaginable pretext charitable communities, native or imported, set themselves to the task of grabbing that money. Clerical Dotheboys Halls and Dothegirls Halls spread themselves over the land. The Catholic laity were, of course, elbowed aside and frowned aside. They were not even fit to teach tailoring or gardening to a rescued street arab. There was really to be little tailoring or gardening, or anything else useful for the poor children. But there was a State grant for their education and maintenance, and that must be grabbed by the clerical

order. Where deserted children and mendicant children were not easily obtained, they were manufactured. Clerical managers paid a commission to male and female recruiters for Dotheboys. Clerical agents tempted little ones with a penny for sweets, and then by the complacency of obliging parents and obliging magistrates were allowed to swear unblushingly that they had found the children "abandoned and begging" in the streets! Off went the little ones to the clerical hive of "industry" under these clerical chevaliers of industry; and by judicious starvation in many, many cases, by the neglect of technical education, by the neglect of cleanliness, *half the Government grant for each little helpless one* went to pay the clerical order and the "interest" on convent buildings!

Read the descriptions in the reports of the Government inspectors of "a condition of things that can be better imagined than described"—the excessive mortality, the miserable feeding, the dirt, the neglect to train the hapless victims for any livelihood. Said Sir Rowland Blennerhassett in his report a few years ago:—

The beds and the sleeping arrangements in some of these schools were most objectionable. . . . Most of the rooms bore evidence of the general carelessness and want of order, and I invariably found the same characteristics stamped on the manager and his assistants.

O sancta simplicitas! Growing boys received *three days a week* nothing but bread and cocoa. After ten years in these State-endowed schools of clericalism boys were still unable to read or write. In two large schools the Government inspector found classes of thirty and forty boys engaged in knitting stockings. A lad of thirteen years had been seven years an inmate, and had never done anything but knit stockings. In common fairness it must be added, as Sir Rowland Blennerhassett observed, that the clerical teachers

were sometimes quite as dirty as their miserable charges.

An official could not see any advantage to be got from bathing. He had never had a bath in his life. In some of the schools the boys bathe only every four or five weeks, sometimes not so often. As many as four use the same bathwater.

O sancta simplicitas! The mortality is only twice or three times as high as among children who have never been submitted to this high and holy care.

A separate and lengthy chapter will be required to describe the manner in which the Board and the Government generally use their patronage and their subsidies in furtherance of clerical rather than lay undertakings, even of a mercantile order. I have no wish to repeat my observations upon the ruinous effects on lay industry of conventual mercantilism. But I would ask, as many Irishmen have asked, Why did the Government grant £10,000 to the Foxford convent and make no similar present to lay manufacturers?*

The profits of a lay industry are genuine profits; the profits of a conventual industry are inextricably mixed with the fruits of begging letters and quasi-religious appeals of all sorts. Besides, there can be no genuine competition and no promotion of labour to the position of employer in such a system. A semi-commercial semi-mendicant factory can never raise the tone of public life in any locality, and will never be endured by any work people with the spirit and the money to quit such a land.

The Commission can easily learn the situation of

* I was interested to observe among the estate purchases of the Board that it had paid the respectable sum of nearly £22,000 to the convent of Loughrea, county Galway, for estates to the amount of some 1,400 acres. I hope that the sale was remunerative to the Loughrea convent. In these hard times in Ireland it is consoling to note that even in a congested district the vow of poverty is still worth £22,000. Many an ordinary pauper might gladly aspire to penury like this.

the manor-house which was sold by the Board to the bishop of a congested diocese, who at once made use of his cheap acquisition to establish in it twenty-five Belgian and German nuns. The zealous prelate, probably acting under superiors, explained that he had brought over the strangers to teach various industries to the Irish. Without presuming to censure, I venture to think that within the Irish world plenty of lay teachers could have been found or formed for the work of instruction. The spectacle of these strangers getting such valuable employment by the aid of the Congested Board and its reverend leaders, while hundreds of poor Irish governesses are starving all over England and the Continent, is not edifying for the Irishman or the Christian. But the simple fact is, that the Board and its branches are nothing but a vast organisation to extend at the expense of the taxpayers an intolerant and extortionate clerical power.

It was this same imported community of clerical foreigners which figured in the following appeal to the visitors at a recent sale of Irish products in London :—

AN IRISH IRELAND FACTORY IN A MANSION.

LOUGHGLYNN, COUNTY ROSCOMMON

With the object of stopping the emigration among the tenants of the Dillon estate, the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary have established in the old mansion of the above landlord a school of agriculture and industries. There the girls of the district are taught, besides domestic economy, farming, butter and cheese-making, gardening, and different home industries, which will bring more comfort in the peasant families and brighten the life in one of the poorest districts in the west of Ireland.

The friends of the Irish movement will find at Loughglynn School handsome hand-made carpets, church and fancy embroidery, lace, etc.

This is exactly a specimen of the way in which such convents, when they have once slipped into

occupation as schools, develop into factories, and from teachers for improvement become employers for profit. It is falsifying the whole idea on which this Loughglynn establishment was founded by the Congested Board in the old mansion of the Dillon estate. It exhibits the pretext on which these Belgian and German nuns were smuggled into Ireland, and were given the work which Irish laywomen could very soon have been found to perform. Laywomen in the employment of the Board would not have been allowed to turn a public school into a private factory; but clerical women can do just as profit-hunting suggests, and the priest-ridden Board merely winks and smiles.

It cannot be too clearly understood that the Loughglynn School was supported by the Board at first, entirely on the plea of its being a school of domestic industry. In the Gaelic phrase, used to attract the confidence of neighbouring families, it was a *Bean-an-Tighe* school—a housewifery school. Now we have it cadging for customers as “an Irish Ireland factory in a mansion,” an Irish Ireland from Flanders and Westphalia! The lay officials of the Board early recognised the danger inherent in this class of enterprises, the most pernicious danger, namely, of the school, which was founded and subsidised to impart domestic knowledge useful for the housekeeping of girls and young women of the agricultural class, being perverted into an industrial establishment for the conventual gain of the superiors of the good nuns from Belgium and the Rhine. Instead of the housewifery school which would fit the young girls of Loughglynn to be the useful wives and mothers of thriving Irish farmers, the danger was, that the marriage-despising and convent-adoring ladies from foreign parts would, quite honestly from their standpoint, turn the scholars into employees, and, instead of training good helpmates

for young Irishmen, would utilise poor workwomen for a conventual factory.

In reply to Sir John Colomb, the able and statesmanlike Professor Campbell clearly expressed his sense of this peril, which attends all conventual undertakings among utilisable populations. I quote the evidence:—

PROFESSOR CAMPBELL—The primary aim of these schools at Loughglynn and Westport is to provide a class of instruction in practical operations, such as gardening, milking, the rearing and feeding of poultry, calves, and pigs, and similar work, which is usually performed by the women of the house, and which is included in the term “farmyard lore.” . . . We want the school to be directed to the home life. *We don't want to teach the making of fancy garments, and so on.* . . . But this we must not forget, that there is a strong tendency at this school, and there will be at all schools of a like kind, to devote too much time to industries.

I myself like to see schools of this kind carried on without industries altogether. They are maintained out of the fund for the improvement of agriculture. I should like to see that fund devoted as much as possible to that object.

You will always find in these schools—and this is a case in point, but I do not urge it against the ladies of this establishment—that they devote too much time to that particular branch of the school.

SIR JOHN COLOMB—Whom do you mean when you say they are inclined to devote too much time?

PROFESSOR CAMPBELL—The teachers in charge, the nuns of the convent.

Of course, the nuns of the convent naturally and innocently wanted to teach the Irish girls not to be helpful wives for Irishmen, but model workwomen for the Germano-Belgic order. Professor Campbell expressed his dissatisfaction as courteously as possible; but the murder was out. The shadow of a shade of censure was hinted at a convent which was merely enlarging its trust, and improving the uses of the fund for the improvement of agriculture; and at once the zealous Bishop of the Board, as a Royal Commissioner, proceeded to jump down the throat of the witness. The monstrous impropriety of not being

satisfied with any innocent liberties taken by such devoted ladies!

MOST REV. DR. O'DONNELL—It is a great advantage to have these intelligent ladies taking an interest in the project?

PROFESSOR CAMPBELL—Yes.

MOST REV. DR. O'DONNELL—Don't you appreciate at Loughglynn the very great advantage of having the devoted services of skilful ladies carrying on the work?

PROFESSOR CAMPBELL—Oh, we appreciate that.

Of course, as I have said a dozen times out of regard for the bedrock truth as well as the law of libel, I do not blame either the Bishop of the Board or all the conventuals from Kenmare to Kamschatka who may be settled in Ireland to live on the taxpayer, and the ratepayer, and the tithepayer. They act according to the clerical conscience. They have got their mission, and they have got holy obedience. I am quite sure that the Bishop of the Board is entirely convinced that the nuns are right; and I am quite sure that the nuns would think it dreadfully sinful if they did not turn a profitable penny for the Order by thinking less of young girls being wives and more of converting them into workwomen for the convent. If those sweet Irish girls drift away, unmarried and wasted, to a factory in Rhode Island or Massachusetts, what serious matter? The Congested Board will get other Irish girls to go to Loughglynn for schooling in housewifery, and by a holy and blessed accident they will be made profit-earners for the convent; and Heaven be merciful to the Board official who does not "appreciate the very great advantages of such devoted services of such skilful ladies"!

I wonder how far the Commission was unaware of the extent to which the power of the political Churchmen is exercised in the appointment to public offices in the congestion area, as it is called. In the congested district of Claremorris, for example, when the district council met on the 24th October, 1906, to

appoint a new clerk in the usual way, they were confronted by a peremptory letter from a parish priest stating that at a meeting of the Roman Catholic clergy of the rural deanery of Claremorris the following resolution was adopted:—

At a meeting of the clergy of the deanery of Claremorris held on the 3rd inst., the Very Rev. Archdeacon Kilkenny in the chair, it was proposed and unanimously adopted that as the condition of the union, financial and moral, is essentially connected with the selection of a worthy clerk of the union in succession to the late lamented Mr. Shanley, *we request the district councillors to refuse their support to any candidate who will not produce a letter of character from the priests of his parish.*

A fitting comment on this letter was made by one of the councillors: "It would be as good for you to put in the advertisement, 'No Protestants need apply.'" The clerical mandate was also meant to exclude every candidate who was not a member of that boycotting League of which the leader of the Congested Board is the treasurer and the ex-chairman. I have no doubt that a visit of the Commission would have been welcomed by crowds of congested admirers in the rural deanery of Claremorris.

The extraordinary increase in the popular subservience and helplessness which may be observed in the west of Ireland during the past twenty years is mainly due, I am convinced, and is often directly traceable, to the direct influence of potentates whom the authority and subsidies of the Board have made appear the arbiters of the people's fortunes. I take an instance from the heart of the scheduled districts of Donegal.

In the poor law union of Glenties, in the poorest and most Irish-speaking district of Donegal, the local guardians had to elect a master for the work-house. Seeing the Irish-speaking character of the population, the Glenties guardians had passed a resolution binding themselves to prefer Irish-speaking

applicants. Nobody, indeed, who does not understand Gaelic can speak with the majority of the poor inmates of the workhouse. Of four candidates for the post only one could speak Irish. Being a respectable man, with good recommendations, was he appointed master? A higher authority than consistency with policy, or care for the language of the poor, intervened in the matter. The following letter was addressed to the guardians by a representative of the Supreme Domination. At the same time the Supreme Domination took measures for the disposal of another salaried office in the theoretical and legal appointment of the board of guardians.

DEAR MR.—,—I shall feel exceedingly grateful to you if you will support the candidate of my choice for the mastership of the Glenties workhouse, Mr. Bernard Quigley. He is highly qualified for the position, having been trained for some time as clerk in the office of the county council. On the score of family connections, being nephew of the noble Bishop of the diocese, he stands high. His character, too, is blameless and irreproachable. On the matter of the medical officership I hope you will have the kindness to hold yourself free until all the candidates are in the field, and that you will decide to support the man whom, after full and serious consideration, I shall regard best deserving of your vote. On this matter of medical officer I hope to address you again further on.

I remain, yours always truly,

JAMES MACFADDEN, P.P.

Without an instant's hesitation the resolution in favour of Gaelic-speaking applicants was thrown overboard, and "the nephew of the noble Bishop" got the job. When the time came the medical officership could be filled on the same principle.

I trust the Commission will remember that Glenties is one of the districts which have had, and expect to have, a large share of the public money dispensed by the Congested Board, and that such appeals as the above from leading clergy of the chief member of the Board must have the effect of almost irresistible commands on all who expect everything from its

clerical generosity. When complaint is made in Ulster or England as to the appointments to Irish situations, here we see how the subordinates of the Congested Board dispose of an office of profit and public service. It is simply over again the ukase of the rural deanery of Claremorris, that pearl of congested districts, ordaining the duties of district councils.

This Glenties case, occurring, like the Claremorris resolution, in the very heart of the congested preserves of the Board, deserves some special consideration in view of the Board's pretended mission of redemption and elevation. We have the Bishop of the Board, the fiery advocate on the Commission of the Board's continuance and extension, brought as prominently as possible upon the stage. We have the parish priest of the pauperised Glenties district, a monsignor of the diocese, if I am not mistaken, taking the leading part in the distribution of public appointments. And we may have the perfect conviction that neither bishop nor parish priest had the slightest consciousness that they were doing anything dictatorial, or unfair, or ruinous to honest competition, or disabling and corrupting to the public, or detrimental and degrading to the public service and efficiency. It is an essential part of the grave, unspeakably grave, situation that these potent ecclesiastics act in the full sense of their right and their duty: the right of pastors to rule in the spirit of a pope of the Dark Ages and the duty of a pastor to see that the nominees of the clergy alone shall enjoy public office and emolument in a region for which the clergy hold themselves responsible to their pastoral profession. I use the names of Bishop O'Donnell and Father MacFadden because they are in the facts. I should make the same comments if they were Bishop X and Father Y. I am really not concerned about individuals, but the system. I have all through

been prepared to grant that Bishop O'Donnell and his priests, like all other bishops and priests engaged in the system, are inspired by what is to them supreme and incontrovertible reason. That crowns the seriousness of Ireland's catastrophe, as well as the seriousness of placing personages imbued with such ideas in regard of the lay nation in positions of civil authority over any portion of the nation.

Mark that there are two public appointments, one urgent and the other proximate, the mastership of the local workhouse and the medical officership of the poor law union. As the district is Gaelic-speaking, the board of guardians have made a knowledge of Irish a condition of the appointment in the case of the workhouse. A good candidate with a knowledge of Irish as well as the other qualifications is in the field. But Father MacFadden, the local parish priest, wants the post for "a nephew of the noble Bishop," namely Bishop O'Donnell of the Board and Commission; and he gets it. Possibly the nephew had got a clerkship under the county council for the same reason. All we know is, that a sister of Bishop O'Donnell married a Mr. Quigley, and that a male offspring of that respectable union has been made, on that express ground, master of the Glenties workhouse. Did the Bishop of the Board protest against this use of his relationship with the youthful Quigley? Did he repudiate it? Let us say that Bishop Somebody Else is "the noble Bishop." Did Bishop Somebody Else protest against Father MacFadden's interference against less aristocratic competitors? Did Bishop Somebody Else repudiate the job on behalf of his "noble nephew"? Did Bishop Somebody Else write to the Glenties Board of Guardians to urge them to elect the best master for the workhouse without regard to the sacrosanct episcopal blood in a candidate's veins? Yet Bishop Somebody Else is to expend the money of the taxpayers in Glenties

Union, and in all the unions of Ireland, if he can get the scope of the Board extended by an arranged commission from Dublin Castle. Is this the way to promote manliness, intelligence, self-help, the conscientious discharge of public office, the conscientious encouragement of public capacity and fair play, in a demoralised population or in any population? Let us not forget that Father MacFadden, as a parish priest, is the regular chief and the supreme constituent of the Parish Committee, which irrigates the locality with the generous stream of public bounty at the expense of the taxpayers.

But there was not only the actual mastership of the workhouse at stake, but the expected medical officership of Glenties Union. Here again the parish priest was equal to the occasion:—

On the matter of the medical officership I hope you will decide to support the man whom, after full and serious consideration, I shall regard as best deserving of your vote.

There is Home Rule for you after the model of a parish committee president of the Congested Districts Board! From university chancellors to members of Parliament, from members of Parliament to workhouse masters and medical officers, there is but one kingmaker within the dominions of Dublin Castle, and he is the parochial or prelatical Poohbah of political clericalism.

When we see that the medical officers of congested Donegal are manufactured in this fashion and by this agency, we may not be entirely unprepared for the sanitary inspection of the orthodox hovels of priest-ridden Donegal being at once a farce and a disgrace. So much was extracted from Father O'Hara, "member for agriculture" on the Congested Board, when under examination by the Commission. He had been denouncing landlords, whether absentee or resident, as being good or nothing, and had been praising the

parish committees, according to the clerical cue, when he was reminded by Sir John Colomb that there was a large sum spent in Donegal on the salaries of sanitary officers who ought to have done what the parish committees pretended to do.

SIR JOHN COLOMB—Would you be surprised to hear that in Donegal the amount spent for salaries for doing this very work is £1,000 a year?

FATHER O'HARA—I think the sanitary officers and sub-sanitary officers get their salaries for doing nothing. . . . The boards of guardians attach little importance to it.

If able and independent medical officers are repelled from public offices under the Donegal unions by the shameless favouritism and dictation rampant in the country, it looks very much as if there are influential potentates who really discourage efficiency in order to have an excuse for fresh demands on the taxpayers to subsidise the parish committees that are practically identical with the priests.

The political priesthood have certainly a fine time in the districts of congestion. Oh that blessed word "congestion"! In the first place, there are the regular public appointments, the medical officerships, the workhouse masterships, etc., etc., which are filled by the clerical masters of such patronage on the "nephew of the noble Bishop" principle more or less; and, in the second place, there are the good things and pickings of the Congested Board, the parish committees, and so forth, which are arranged by the clerics on the simple principle that they are the Board. Let us freely grant that all is done with the noblest intentions and the most self-sacrificial motives. We have all the same a double stream of public subsidies absolutely at the disposal of the priests and reserved for the enjoyment of their creatures, parasites, acolytes, and "nephews." Why not also their "cousins and their aunts"? Yet we talk of the urgency of teaching the demoralised Irish

peasantry manliness and independence of character and the capacity for strenuous competition in the race of life—what hypocrites we are!—when a medical man with the best diplomas from Dublin and London, with recommendations by the most competent judges, is not allowed to get even within sight of the appointing body *because the appointing body must do the behest of the political priest!*

To do the behest of the political priesthood, that is the undignified mission of the Congested Districts Board. And now the Board expects the arranged Commission to recommend the extension of its powers to the whole of Ireland.

* * * * *

The Congested Districts Board is not only pursuing the path of the national workshops at Paris in 1848, but its equivalents for those economic undertakings are into the bargain at the disposal of sacerdotal autocrats pledged to a programme of political and social subversion which agitates Ireland to the very foundations.

I have said that the members and agents of a body disposing of public money with the lavish hand of the Congested Board *should at least not belong to any profession which derives its emoluments from the very people who are recipients of the Board's benefactions.* It is no reflection upon any class to remember that human nature is human nature. If a priest or a bishop of any denomination spends £1,000 of public money in a district which yields him pecuniary support, it is quite impossible to blame the grateful people, expectant also of favours to come, for remembering such benefactions on the payment of their dues and offerings. We have seen the keenness of those personages in securing every sort of profitable situation for their friends and nominees. Can we wonder that they do not feel called upon to refuse

the enhanced dues and subscriptions of every kind which attest the "congested" recognition of their flocks? It would be contrary to human nature if the potentates who distribute, and are expected to distribute, thousands sterling of public money, fail to perceive the influence of their generosity when they ask for a share of the prosperity of their people.

If the Commissioners look around them on visiting the country village of Letterkenny, in Donegal—a poor little place of a couple of thousand inhabitants—they will see a vast cathedral and other ecclesiastical buildings which have been erected since the establishment of the Congested Board at an expense not far short of £100,000. I venture to say that, outside of a congested district scheduled for appalling pauperism, you could hardly find in England or Ireland such a palatial structure erected by a grateful people in a poor village of 2,000 souls. Human nature is human nature; and if the public moneys lavished by the Congested Board appeal to certain aspects of it, the fault must lie in the creators and continuators of such a pauperising institution. Certainly, I cannot be expected to blame either priests or people who have succumbed to such pressure of circumstances.

But I would beg the Commission to understand that my inquiries, conducted on both sides of the Atlantic, have left no doubt whatever upon my mind as to the constitution and operations of the Congested Board; its grants and refusals of public money alike; the policy of social upheaval of which it is the standard-bearer; the abject submissiveness which it induces or extorts among its beneficiaries; the unbridled arrogance which it has developed among its directors and the class to which they belong, and which they sedulously aggrandise; the discouragement or suppression of lay independence of every kind. All these evils, unexampled elsewhere in Europe, are driving every man and woman of the least spirit out of the country who

possesses a friend to pay the passage money and to help on landing. "Bow the neck, and you will receive a grant of public money," is almost the motto of the Congested Board. "No free man need apply," is certainly the motto of the clerico-political associations in whose hand the Board is but an instrument. The steerages of the passenger steamers are filled with fugitives from that system from every part of Ireland.

The Commission seeks to prevent pauperism in Ireland; the clerical masters of the Board are spreading pauperism through every quarter of the country.* Does the Commission know that a struggling farmer can be charged £25 for the marriage of his daughter? One of the most respected Irish merchants of London related to me a short time ago that his own brother, a hard-working farmer, had to pay £25 because he was giving £500 to his daughter. The plundered man threatened marriage before the registrar. "Do," was the mocking response, "and no decent woman in Ireland will speak to your daughter." The money had to be paid. The robber could not be punished. At a funeral in a congested district the pecuniary collection extorted by the Churchman from the friends of the deceased, "on the coffin lid," amounted to £193, not a friendly contribution to the wants of the bereaved family, but tribute to an influence potent with the Congested Board.

* It should be noted with regard to all those Government Convent Factories which the Board and its congeners are establishing in Ireland with public money, *the manufacturing Orders take full advantage of local poverty to give low wages.* Thus, of the Foxford Convent Factory, noticed later, we get from a clerical layman, Mr. O'Connor Don, the following suggestive evidence: "Mostly women are employed. . . . The wages are not good . . . but I forget what they are."

The apparent indifference of this witness to the wages paid in a clerical factory is also instructive.

THE MYSTERY OF LOUGHGLYNN HOUSE.

HOW THE TAXPAYERS LOST £8,900 IN ORDER TO
PLANT A FOREIGN CONVENT IN ROSCOMMON.

A PRECIOUS instance of the unbusiness-like methods of the Board, which the Commission of Inquiry failed as usual to inquire into, is afforded by the notorious case of the planting of a convent of Belgo-German nuns at Loughglynn House, in Roscommon, "in order to check the decay of Ireland." There is so much latent in this unexplored transaction that I must confine myself to pointing out the need of explanation of the unexplained features, citing the defective evidence itself. The general history of the affair seems to be this:—

1. Loughglynn House, the mansion of the Dillon Estate, comes into possession of the Board.

2. *An offer of £11,000 is made by a layman for the mansion, demesne, and sporting rights over estate.*

3. The tenantry are satisfied and consent.

4. A mysterious agitation against selling the sporting rights is engineered, and the offer of £11,000 falls through.

5. Loughglynn House, together with one hundred acres of the demesne, becomes the property of a community of nuns, imported from Belgium—at a price of only £2,100, being an immediate loss of £8,900 to the taxpayers!

6. Some of the local agitators soon afterwards themselves purchased sporting rights from consenting tenants, which disposes of any theory of real hostility to the sale of sporting rights.

The question, among others, remains: How was

the Board brought to reject £11,000—which also meant the residence of a family of wealthy laymen, consumers and employers,—in favour of £2,100 for importing a convent of foreign nuns, who could not be generous employers or customers?

N.B.—These nuns were also subsidised as teachers of domestic industry by the Board, but have developed “an Irish Ireland Factory” in spite of the remonstrances of the Board inspector, who was quite unsupported, of course, by the Cleric-Ridden Board. As I have said all through, I impute no improper motives to any persons immediately engaged in these curious transactions. *The wires of such intrigues may have been, and must have been, worked hundreds of miles from Roscommon.* And now for the evidence:—

HOW THE CONSENT OF TENANTS WAS COUNTERACTED.

In the official memorandum presented to the Commission on behalf of the Board—(*Evidence, Vol. I., page 233*)—it is expressly admitted that the sporting rights on the Dillon Estate were “a valuable asset” which rendered easy the profitable sale of the Loughglynn mansion and demesne:—

In June, 1900, the Congested District Board, having in view the letting of the sporting rights on the Dillon Estate, for the sole benefit of the tenants, decided to reserve these rights when selling the holdings to the tenants. The Board were of opinion that *these rights were a valuable asset*. . . . A considerable number of tenants had expressed their willingness to purchase their holdings subject to this reservation. . . . The Board had received an offer of £11,000 for the sporting rights on the entire estate with Loughglynn House and demesne. . . . The Board has since sold the house with one hundred acres immediately surrounding it for £2,100, and the sporting rights, which are now the property of the individual tenants, are of very little pecuniary value.

As fishy a transaction as ever occurred under Russian Tchinovniks! Who or what procured for it the official sanction of the Board? We have from

Mr. Doran, Chief Land Inspector of the Board, some curious evidence which brings us, at any rate, to a point where the Commission of Inquiry ought to have inquired most closely and resolutely, but where they skipped with agility and silence to less clerical proceedings. *Evidence, Vol. I., pages 150—1.*

MR. DORAN—If the sporting rights were preserved all over the estate they would become a valuable asset. . . . Many of the tenants thought this a very good idea and took it up quite cordially. *But another view was then put before them* that it was not a proper thing for the Board to attempt to have any burthen upon the fee simple of the holdings. . . . *The Board consequently gave way on the matter.*

Here the Chief Land Inspector of the Board fully confirms the valuable character of the asset, the cordial consent of the tenants, the subsequent engineering to get the £11,000 of the lay purchasers rejected in favour of the £2,100 offered by the patrons of the nunnery from Belgium; and the significant conclusion: “The Board consequently gave way on the matter.”

But the Chief Land Inspector of the Board also went further. He gave formal and direct evidence; 1. that the tenants, when let alone, cordially welcome purchasers of sporting rights, and have actually sold to such purchasers sporting rights on the Dillon Estate; 2. that *the Board is in the habit of reserving sporting rights for separate disposal*; and 3, that a “local politician” is known to have been one of the wire-pullers who engineered the agitation, though perfectly ready himself to rent sporting rights from the tenantry. Yet, even though it was proved that the Board had departed from its usual practice, the Commission of Inquiry did not presume to push the inquiry. Was it because the patrons of the convent from Belgium blocked the way? But here is the evidence in question:—

MR. DORAN—Since the sale of the holdings without reservation the tenants have actually let the sporting on one section of the estate for £50 a year to a club.

SIR ANTONY MACDONNELL—Do they preserve?

MR. DORAN—Every man is a gamekeeper. When people come to shoot, some of the tenants act as beaters, and enjoy the sport.

So much for the lying pretence put forward by the plotters against the lay purchasers, that the interests of the tenants must suffer.

But Mr. Doran proceeded to explain that the Board habitually reserved sporting rights when they were valuable assets! This information seemed to astound even Sir Antony MacDonnell, after seeing what had happened at Loughglynn Mansion Convent Factory.

SIR JOHN COLOMB—I would like to know do the Board in their arrangements and procedure recognise the importance, not in reference to landlord and tenant or any special class, but generally of game and fishing as a great national Irish asset?

MR. DORAN—They do. . . . *The Board do not convey to the tenants valuable fishery or sporting rights.* The Board bought the estate as a whole, and in fixing the price at which it would resell to the tenants it took into account the value of these game and sporting rights they were to retain, and in that way *separated the value of the sporting rights from the land!*

Did Sir Antony MacDonnell, in spite of his official predilections, suspect that there was something excessively fishy somewhere? At any rate, he interposed with some valuable questions which elicited valuable answers from the Chief Land Inspector to the Board.

SIR ANTONY MACDONNELL—What will happen in regard to these fisheries when the tenants are vested with the proprietary rights in the holdings?

MR. DORAN—They will remain as they are now, with the sporting rights over their holdings reserved.

SIR ANTONY MACDONNELL—In the possession of the Board?

MR. DORAN—*Or sold by the Board to a sporting tenant. (!)* The tenants will benefit by the arrangement, because some of them will be employed as gillies, and others will be paid a price per head for birds shot on the lands. (!)

SIR ANTONY MACDONNELL—You recognise that the sporting rights and fishery rights need not necessarily be sold to the tenants?

MR. DORAN—No. In these cases where they have a substantial value the tenants are in agreement with what the Board have done.

SIR ANTHONY MACDONNELL—That is to say, the tenants do not claim?

MR. DORAN—No, they do not claim, *and they are as a rule most courteous to the persons renting the sporting rights.*

Why were all these principles and practices and rules of the Board abandoned and violated at Loughglynn House and demesne, in order to reject the £11,000 of a lay purchaser and to accept the £2,100 of the Superiors of a convent of Belgo-German nuns? Who are the parties behind the scenes who were able to swindle the taxpayers out of £8,900 and to swindle the Dillon Estate out of the valuable presence and occupation of wealthy lay owners, who could make the Loughglynn demesne an example of fruitful agriculture, and Loughglynn House a seat of hospitality; who could offer healthy and instructive domestic service in kitchen and parlour to young girls of Loughglynn seeking a livelihood; who could employ the sons of the tenantry as gillies and beaters; and whose custom and whose guests could bring good money into the countryside? Who swindled Ireland out of that? What was the power behind the scenes which brought a company of foreign religious women from Gueldres or **Brabant** instead of all that?

I have said above that the wires which pulled the puppets at Loughglynn may have worked from hundreds of miles away. It is clear that they *must* have worked from a distance of hundreds of miles. That Belgo-German convent did not move from the Scheldt or Meuse to the Shannon quite of its own accord; nor was its transplantation a casual accident. The Superiors of the Franciscan Conventual Order do not reside in Roscommon nor even in Dublin Castle. Those plain Flemish or Westphalian peasant women who had taken the Franciscan vows somewhere between Ostende and Paderborn, and had vowed to consecrate their knowledge of butter-making and lace-making to the service of their Superiors, had no

means of knowing of themselves that a fair mansion and broad acres were waiting somewhere among the English heretics to be attached to the gown of their Superioress or Mother Guardian. Mother Guardian herself neither wanted, nor was able to move herself and her pious flock so far, far from the land of the Vlaamsch and the Plaat. When she got her orders, she must go under Holy Obedience to the Shannon or the Vistula or the Ganges. Who procured from Rome the marching orders for those pious peasant women? What local agents advised Propaganda that far away in the "Mission District," formerly called an Irish Church, there were useful, good, kind friends who would throw away £11,000 of public money and denationalise one hundred Irish acres, in order to board and lodge a company of Propaganda's Belgian or German servants and workwomen?

I have not patience to discuss the miserable pretext that the Board must go to some town or village on the Continent in order to find some dozens of foreign women to teach housewifery to the young girls of West Ireland. There are dozens and hundreds of intelligent Irish women and girls who could be thoroughly trained in England, if necessary, for the post of teachers of dairy work, housewifery, etc., for a fraction of that £8,900 which the Board threw away in order to plant foreign conventuals on the Dillon Estate. In a similar way the technical schools are staffed with clerics to the exclusion of Irish laymen; and the whole secondary education of the country is secured by British legislation to the cram-cram academies of all sorts of male and female conventuals; while thousands of Irish men and girls are driven, far from native land, to beg for teacherships and governess-situations from Paris to San Francisco. It is a mean and cruel trickery this policy of the British Government in Ireland. It is hardly a credit to the Protestant name.

And, of course, the Belgian conventuals at Loughglynn snapped their pious fingers at the efforts of honest inspectors, like Professor J. R. Campbell, to keep them from turning the "Housewife School" into one of the usual sort of convent factories which the French could endure no longer. It would be wrong to blame the foreign nuns at Loughglynn. They are under Holy Obedience, and if they get an order from their Superior in Italy or Belgium to make money for the Order by turning the "Housewife School" into a lace factory or an embroidery factory, they will obey the Superior. What was the use of Professor Campbell blaming "the strong tendency of the nuns at Loughglynn to devote too much time to industries"? What can foreign nuns care about making young Irish girls capable housewives to be fit for life-helpmates of young Irish farmers? They think very poorly of marriage at all; while making the young Irish girls expert lace-workers for the convent factory both stops marriages and makes profit for good works. And they know very well that the Bishop of the Board will jump upon the rash inspectors, as he did upon the Professor, with an indignant reproach: "Don't you appreciate at Loughglynn the very great advantage of having the devoted services of skilled ladies carrying on the work?"

Not that Bishop O'Donnell is to blame any more than the foreign nuns. He is as much under Holy Obedience as any of them; doubly so, if possible; for Ireland is a "District," not a "Church"; "a District of the Foreign Missions" at Rome; and in a "Mission District" there is simply no room for hesitation on the part of priest or prelate. If Bishop O'Donnell has been instructed to favour the introduction of Chinese nuns into every village of Ireland, he will do it. And I praise him for his Holy Obedience. But civil society is condemned to ruin, as in Ireland, when posts of lay trust and secular duty are placed, by

political bargainers, in the hands of men bound to postpone every patriotic and civil consideration to the instructions of foreign Ecclesiastical authority.

* * * * *

The Commission of Inquiry kept a respectful distance from inquiry into the shameless job which repelled a lay family and £11,000 from Loughglynn House and demesne. Let us cheerfully assume that no member of the Board was behind the scenes of that transaction. So much the more need for inquiry. Who could have engineered that transplantation of foreign religious to the home of Irish gentry bought with public money?

And, of course, the Commission of Non-inquiry did not inquire into the case of the convent factory at Foxford, in Mayo. Here again was a female convent which practically received as a gift nearly £10,000 of public money to start a woollen factory, besides getting several thousands of pounds as loans in addition. There are many, many Irish firms of laymen which could undertake such a work for a loan of £10,000, and which would present to the employees advantages that the very nature of a conventual institution forbids for ever to offer under any conditions whatever. In a lay factory the best of the lay employees may rise to the highest posts, to partnership itself. The generous spirit of independence and emulation can inspire the humblest endeavours. *The very nature of the conventual factory forbids any hopes of the kind.* The convent is perpetual, and the outsider is perpetually excluded from its direction, except by that "death to the world" which is death to home and family ties. Even the workwoman who is admitted to the sisterhood will never be more than the passive instrument, divested of will and personality, of the convent superiors. *Religiously, the nun may be an angel; economically, she is a slave.* I revere

her in religion, but in the factory I ask her to depart to her prayers. The employees of a convent factory can only be the sub-slaves of pious instruments.

And it is the most profound mistake to imagine that the Irish, or any Catholic people, like to be the employees of nuns or priests in secular work. On the contrary, they loathe it, and they quit it for America when they get the chance.

How can the lay supervision be exercised over convent factories? It is not possible. Let a Government Inspector dare to blame the management, the finance, the hygiene, of a convent factory. Let a member of Parliament dare to criticise the accounts or the products. Maynooth will protest with elaborate sanctity. The *Freeman's Journal* will have a fit. The populace will be mysteriously inspired to submit the critics to the ordeal by water, or the ordeal by fire, to the ordeal by bludgeon and pavingstone, at the least. What Government has dared to inspect the condition of health even of the poor girls who toil from morning to night over the monotonous washtubs of the convent laundries? There is money in the laundries. For the convents.

So here is about all that the Non-inquiry Commission of Inquiry got to know of the convent factory at Foxford. The Board Inspector of Industries told the bare and curtailed story:—

MR. W. J. D. WALKER—Foxford got a grant of £8,333, and in connection with the mill race £1,164. . . . In addition to that there was a loan repayable by instalments. . . . The initial expenditure was in connection with the buildings.

In another place (*Evidence V.*, 53) I find the Chairman of the Commission giving expression to his cheerful contentment with the Foxford convent factory:—

LORD DUDLEY—Foxford is run by the nuns with assistance from the Congested Districts Board, and employs local labour.

And that is about all the Commission of Inquiry cared or dared to inquire! Not a word about sanitary inspection even. The Commission just hears the witnesses whom the arrangers of the evidence have provided. And that is Maynooth-cum-Castle Inquiry. I may at this point remark that the whole business of sanitary inspection of home industries in particular is totally neglected or suppressed within the special domain or dominion of the Congested Board.

I have before me the last Report on Factories and Workshops, and under table 8, relating to the administration by local authorities in 1905 of the homework provisions of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, there appears to be no administration of the Act whatever in Donegal, Sligo, Mayo, and Roscommon. There is no inspection of homeworkers, no supervision of the giving out of work in unwholesome premises, no notification of infectious diseases among homeworkers in Donegal, Sligo, Mayo, and Roscommon. Yet we know that tuberculosis is rife and rampant in West Ireland. Even in the counties in which there are reports from the sanitary inspectors the condition of the workers appears to be often abominably bad, which does not look encouraging for the Congested Board's special counties, where there is no inspection at all.

It may seem to the general public, if not to the Non-inquiry Commission of Inquiry, that the £8,900, which was sacrificed by the Board for the pious delight of planting a foreign convent in Roscommon, could have been better used in a good many ways throughout West Ireland. In the diocese of Raphoe, in Donegal, for instance, there might have been some aid given to the semi-starving medical officers, who are expected by the abominable meanness of the local councils to discharge their professional responsibilities amid villages and towns of indescribable squalor

on the almost inhuman average of £100 a year! In the Glenties union, for example, there are only seven medical men for a territory of 400 square miles, and their pittance is £100 a year! Education would produce sanitation, and the political Churchmen block both. Let the reader note that the £11,000 wasted at Loughglynn and the £10,000 donated at Foxford make *over twenty thousand pounds given to two convent factories* at the expense of lay interests.

By the way, we should remark that Dublin Castle is spreading the Belgo-Germanic conventuals of Loughglynn over Ireland, and evidence was placed before the Commission, who of course skipped to another subject. A Father Clery, C.C., "nominated to give evidence by the Bishop of Elphin," as Lord Dudley announced with becoming reverence, stated that nuns from Loughglynn were ready to do anything needful to elevate the Irish of Sligo as well as Roscommon for "encouragement," which means £ s. d. The Bishop of the Board volunteered to mention the result:—

LORD DUDLEY—To whom did they make this "offer"?

REV. FATHER CLERY—To the Bishop.

LORD DUDLEY—Did they get any direct financial aid from the Board?

MOST REV. DR. O'DONNELL—Rather, my Lord, it has been the Department. The Bishop, Dr. Clancy, has made an arrangement with the Department of Agriculture, and what the details are I do not know.

And the Non-Inquiry Commission did not want to know. Government was founding convents. That was well. Convents which "do not pay good wages," as Mr. O'Connor Don admits.

THE CLERICAL COMBINATION AGAINST PROPERTY NOT CONFINED TO THE CONGESTED DISTRICTS.

AN EXAMPLE FROM TIPPERARY—CATTLE-DRIVING
CHURCHMEN AND THEIR MAGISTRATES.

It cannot be too clearly understood that the Ribbon conspiracy of the political clergy is in no way confined to the congested districts. This clear understanding is necessary to the just comprehension of the claim for an extension of the parish committee system to the whole of Ireland. Bishop O'Donnell merely means, in the innocence of his heart, "to overthrow the ascendancy of the classes," just like Mr. Victor Grayson, M.P., and Mr. Pete Curran, M.P. The extension of the parish committee system to the whole of Ireland, dealing out subsidies from the public funds, licensing the priests as the authorised centres of taxpaid benefactions, would simply make the political priesthood outside as well as inside the congested area the official masters of the discontented and the official disturbers of the social constitution. Is the political priesthood outside the congested area in any respect a better guardian of individual liberty and property than within that region? It is easy to arrive at certainty upon the question. The *Leinster Leader* of the 5th October last published the statement made in public meeting, without contradiction or qualification, by a cattle-raiding panegyrist, Mr. Patrick White, M.P., that "they fear no foe so long as their actions meet, as they do meet, with the sanction of their clergy." This is fairly intelligible. "As they do meet." And it must be added that the parliamentary

cattle-driver can, in the first place, point to the fact that neither priests nor bishops, with a very few exceptions, have opposed cattle-driving.

When anybody proposes an improvement in public education, there is no silence on the part of priest and prelate. The denunciation of the godless innovation rolls from pulpit to pulpit, and overflows the columns of the newspaper press. But I can select from scores of instances the illustration of the contrary attitude of the political clergy towards private property and public honesty outside also the congested area of episcopal Ribbonmen and parish committees.

I find in the *Freeman's Journal*, that organ of the political Church, an account of proceedings in the Borrisokane Petty Sessions on the 11th September last which might cause the envy of all the reverend crusaders of cattle-raiding between Letterkenny and Tralee. If the political priests of Tipperary are not yet congested parish committeemen, they possess all the qualifications. The short story of the affair before the persons called magistrates at Borrisokane is this : (1) the cattle raid; (2) the packing of the Bench with Land League magistrates; (3) the trial and liberation of the raiders; (4) the public meeting of congratulation to the raiders, chairmaned by a parish priest, supported by three parish priests and a dozen of their reverend curates. All those cattle-raiding pastors would be chairmen of parish committees when the operations of the Congested Board are extended to all Ireland. I give the summary of events from the *Freeman's Journal*.

THE RAID AND THE RAIDERS.

To leave no doubt of the character of the crime and the criminals, I quote the report :—

To-day at Borrisokane Petty Sessions, before a Bench consisting of eighteen magistrates, a number of summonses were heard, at the suit of District Inspector Madden, against a number of men who

were charged with unlawful assembly in connection with the driving of cattle off grazing lands in the neighbourhood. There were, in all, twenty-seven defendants against whom summonses were issued. Fifteen of these had been before the court at the last petty sessions, when the Bench was equally divided, and the case was adjourned. In this case the defendants were charged with unlawful assembly at Lisnagower on the 28th June, 1907, with intent to compel Henry Davis Kenny to surrender the grazing lands at Ballymona and Lisnagower.

THE CRIMINALS GLORY IN THE CRIME.

There was no attempt even to deny that the prisoners had broken into the property of Mr. Kenny and had driven his cattle off the land. On the contrary, the counsel for the prisoners frankly declared that, as Mr. Kenny had rented the lands for grazing purposes without heeding the opposition of the Land League class in the neighbourhood, the accused were entirely justified in assailing his property with open violence. Here are the *ipsissima verba* of Mr. Harbinson, the counsel for the criminals :—

Mr. Kenny, as a tenant under the eleven months system, was a foe to public peace and public order, and, that being so, public opinion said that this man, being objectionable from the social standpoint, should be obliged to disgorge that which in reality was not his.

THE PRIEST WHO PRESSED MR. KENNY.

A curious feature, curious and significant, though common, was that a priest had tried to persuade Mr. Kenny to surrender to the League previous to the actual raid. I quote from Mr. Harbinson's cross-examination of the owner of the cattle :—

At one time you promised Father Gilligan to give up the land ?
—Yes.

You gave that promise because you thought it was your duty ?—
I didn't think it was my duty. I thought it would keep the people quiet.

THE MAGISTERIAL MAJORITY SUPPORTS CRIME.

After various insults had been showered upon Mr. Kenny the majority of "magistrates" declared that freedom and liberation were the least recognition they could pay to the public and private virtues of the raiders:—

The magistrates then retired to consider their verdict, and after a short absence returned, and Major Dease announced that the majority of the magistrates refused informations in these cases.

The decision was received with cheers in the court, which were taken up by the crowd outside the courthouse.

PRIESTS HEAD THE CONGRATULATORY DEMONSTRATION.

After this open and avowed triumph of rascality it only remained to the political priesthood to lead the chorus of approval and joy. A meeting was organised. The *Freeman* narrates in brief the sacerdotal exhortation to the observance of the shortened Decalogue regarding landed estates in Ireland. The holy men announced again that in such cases the two commandments against stealing and coveting were dropped out:—

When the defendants came out from the courthouse they were received with enthusiastic cheering by the crowd. A procession was formed, and paraded the streets, the bands playing national airs. Later on a meeting was held, and speeches delivered from a wagonette.

The Rev. J. Maher, P.P., Borrisokane, who presided, congratulated the people on the result of that day's proceedings. He was delighted to see such a large gathering present, for it showed that *the people were alive to the needs of the hour*. They recognised that agriculture was now the principal industry of this country. Our industries, our mills, and our tanneries had been taken from us by alien laws. We had been robbed of everything except the land by an alien Government, and we would be robbed of the land too if it could be taken over to England (cheers). However, they were determined to have Ireland for the Irish and the land for the people. He appealed to them all to concentrate on the effort to obtain Home Rule.

The Rev. J. Gilligan, P.P., Shinrone, said that in the thirties of the last century their fathers had buried the tithes at the Devil's Bit, and

that day *they had struck a blow against the grazing system*. If they continued like that, before twelve months were over the grazing system would be a thing of the past (cheers).

THE NAMES OF THE PRIESTS.

It only remains to give the names of the assistant clergy. It may be seen that they were quite a miniature œcumenical council of the cattle-raiding Church in Tipperary:—

Amongst the clergymen present during the day were—Rev. J. Maher, P.P., Borrisokane; Rev. J. Costigan, P.P., Cloughjordan; Rev. J. Gilligan, P.P., Shinrone; Rev. J. Maher, C.C., Borrisokane; Rev. H. Moloney, Borrisokane; Rev. W. Scanlan, C.C., Shinrone; Rev. P. Smythe, Puckan; Rev. M. O'Connor, C.C., Cloughjordan; Rev. P. Hogan, C.C., Toomevara; Rev. A. M'Namara, C.C., Toomevara; Rev. T. Meehan, C.C., Inagh; Rev. M. J. Hoolihan, C.C., Lorrha; Rev. D. Murphy, C.C., Dunkerrin; and Rev. Father Clery, Toomevara.

Let us admit that these priests are themselves the victims of their system. Educated and trained as they are, led by a discipline of iron as they are, I carefully abstain from personal accusations of such servants and tools; but could you find such another spectacle throughout Christian civilisation, a body of ministers of religion openly applauding and inciting open brigandage and terrorism by the mob, open violation of justice by the magisterial accomplices, proclaiming that coercion and dishonesty were “the need of the hour,” that intimidation and violence were needed and wanted “to strike a blow” at the property of fellow-citizens and countrymen? And all the while there are hundreds of thousands of undercultivated farms in Ireland calling for tillage and employment of labour; and all intelligent observers, even Catholic bishops, have to record that Ireland would bloom like a garden, “if the people only worked as the English and Scotch do.” And unquestionably the Irish people would work like the English and Scotch, if they were

as free as the English and Scotch from the counsels and incitements, fortified by every kind of appeal to cupidity, to sloth, and to superstition, of a political priesthood intent upon consolidating the edifice of their rapacious hierocracy above the ruins of every social and intellectual superiority in the country. These men prate of loyalty! What they understand by loyalty is, indeed, something profoundly unnational, Ireland governed by priestly satraps under the ægis of the British crown. They will accept in words the supremacy of the crown of Britain or the crown of China, if that supremacy only means their own. Such are the rulers of the parochial committees that the Congested Board leaders want to rule the whole of Ireland. And why not? Have they not already, "under the British crown," all the schools of the country? and the ignorance and enslavement of the Irish intelligence are the work of their hands.

THE CONGESTION BOARD AND THE RIBBON LODGE—THE ROBESPIERRES OF THE SACRISTY.

I REFERRED to the continued outflow of population during the reign of the congested fiction as an absolute proof that the efficacy of the Board is as microscopic as its pretensions are vast. Take even Donegal, for instance. Where is the success, taken as a whole, of developing some industry in the Rosses, or in facilitating the railway service with the new extravagant cathedral at Letterkenny, when forty or fifty thousand Donegal peasants and fishermen have vanished utterly out of the county since the congested charlatanism began its operations? But there is another proof which I would have commended to the most earnest consideration of the Commission.

I allude to the growing demand of the leaders and patrons of the congested fiction for the expropriation of Irish landowners as the next thing necessary for the congested policy of peace and goodwill. Nothing can show more clearly how barely and merely the congested pseudo-philanthropy has touched the skirts of misery in Ireland than this demand of the congested agitators for the policy of Robespierre or the Russian terrorists in place of the milder methods of the Right Hon. Mr. George Wyndham. In this connection I respectfully invite attention to the accompanying letter recently written on a public occasion by a venerable colleague in the pastorate of the chief member of the Congested Board. In a public letter dated Loughrea, the 18th January of last year, the most reverend Bishop

of Clonfert addresses himself as follows to the urgent necessity of employing "legal compulsion" in order to force Irish owners and occupiers to furnish "the amount of land required for a systematic redistribution among those in need."

LETTER FROM THE BISHOP OF CLONFERT.

ST. BRENDAN'S, LOUGHREA, *Jan. 18th, 1907.*

DEAR MR. COGAVIN,—I should be glad to offer a tribute of respect to the memory of Matt Harris by assisting at your celebration on Sunday next. I find, however, that it is impossible for me to be present. It would also be a very sincere pleasure to join in your welcomes to Mr. John Dillon. No man in Ireland has, I think, shown more unselfishness, consistency, or strenuous earnestness in public life than he has. It is right that in present circumstances this confidence in Mr. Dillon, as in the other leaders of the Irish party and in parliamentary methods, should find unmistakable expression before the country.

The land question is still the most pressing in Ireland, especially in the west. Further observation has strengthened the conviction formed some time since that *this question cannot be satisfactorily settled without employing legal compulsion.* In my opinion, owners and occupiers will not sell freely the amount of land required for a *systematic redistribution among those in need*, and compulsion by law is the only form of compulsion which a civilised and Catholic nation should seek to employ.

For this and other reasons I am strongly in favour of a limited power of expropriation, to be vested in a tribunal which could be trusted to deal impartially with all parties. This power should not be applicable till friendly negotiations had failed, and should be exercised gradually, according as the funds required for compensation could be economically raised. *Priority should be given to cases of urgency, and, therefore, to the whole of Connaught.* The very existence of this power would oil the wheels of negotiation, and cut off a *very real temptation to use methods forbidden by the law of God*, and grievously detrimental to the character of the people.

THOMAS O'DEA.

What a grim satire upon the inutility of the Congested Board is this cool proposal of a Christian prelate to drive the requisite number of Irish owners and occupiers out of their estates by means of the

“compulsion by law which is the only form of compulsion that a civilised and Catholic nation should seek to employ”! I am not aware that the zealous Bishop of Clonfert as readily accepts “compulsion by law” applied to the French Church as he does the proposal to expropriate the whole of the gentry and large farmers of Connaught.

I would also very earnestly direct attention to the most grave declaration by this important prelate—who was lately President of Maynooth College—that the power of expropriating owners and occupiers “would cut off a very real temptation to use methods forbidden by the law of God, and grievously detrimental to the character of the people.” This public profession by the prelate illuminates with a light which cannot be obscured the whole of the domestic situation and the congested fiction in Ireland. Mark the statement, the authoritative statement, that the existence of an unexpropriated class of owners and occupiers in Connaught constitutes “a very real temptation to use methods forbidden by the law of God”! All the requisite land in Ireland “systematically redistributed” among the needy clients of the venerable prelate and his colleagues, and then the whole of the redistributed territory paying the death-bed toll and tax to the venerable authors of the redistribution—here indeed is a goal for Christian endeavour in the congested area! How is it possible to expect that the Congested Board or any other board, in Ireland or any other country, can find a population really ready to work with all its capacity and energy for gradual improvement, when that same population is being told by its most authoritative leaders that all the land which it desires ought to be obtained by “compulsory expropriation” from the original owners? The diocese of Clonfert may be called a congested district. It is surrounded by congested districts. Yet the compulsory redistribution of Connaught

among the poorer tenantry is the doctrine of its chief pastor, and is notoriously shared by members of the Congested Board, as well as by hundreds or thousands of its reverend agents in the Parish Committees. If the compulsory expropriation of owners is the true goal of the Congested Board, then, for goodness' sake, let it stop wasting the public money on voluntary purchases and sales, which it can shortly effect at a nominal cost under "legal compulsion." Robbery is cheap, except to the robbed.

A certain Mr. White, M.P., one of the League nominees of the lodges and sacristies which take the place of constituencies in Ireland, declared, as quoted at a former page, that, "so long as our holy pastors approve of our actions, that is good enough for us." Will the doctrine of the Clonfert bishop that the "want of a power of compulsory expropriation" constitutes in itself "a very real temptation to the use of methods contrary to the law of God" be regarded by the Clonfert boycotters and outrage organisers as a serious disavowal by the "holy pastors" of cattle raiding?

The most reverend Bishop of Clonfert may have acted with entire innocence, or he may have been simply carrying out the orders of superiors whom he was unable to disobey; but it is instructive to observe that the local adherents of the League in his own diocese of Clonfert seem to have no doubt whatever as to the legitimacy of employing the black list, with its well-known consequences, against all who decline to submit to the organisation. The *Connaught Leader* of the 3rd August of the current year reports that at a meeting of the committee of the Clonfert branch of the United Irish League it was resolved:—

To give a fortnight's time to those who did not yet join the branch and who ought to join. After that time the names will be published and such as do not join *will be left to themselves.*

The phrase "to be left to themselves" has no esoteric or unknown meaning for the affiliates of the Congested Districts League. As the *Connaught Leader* of the 27th July of the current year reported, the parish priest who presided over the branch of the United Irish League at Kilchreest on the 21st July volunteered the following ecclesiastical commentary upon the methods which would be "nothing illegal" in dealing with objectionable characters:—

Let no one touch the grazier at the fairs; let no one drive his cattle, shear his sheep, or make his hay. If they did their duty, they would make county Galway as hot as the lower regions for any man who was the enemy of the people.

This is not an extract from the late Citizen Marat at a meeting of the Jacobin Club during the Terror. It is the moral exhortation of a Christian cleric in the responsible position of pastor of a parish in the Island of Saints. If I mistake not, the reverend orator belongs to the archdiocese of the Most Rev. Dr. Healy, lately a Royal Commissioner on university education in Ireland, appointed by Government to oppose the existence of an unsectarian university in the country. Here we have an example of education which was certainly not unsectarian.

One of the most abominable results of the alliance between the political sacristies and the organisers of intimidation and outrage is the use of the edifices of worship for the promulgation and dissemination of the menaces and black lists of the League. A couple of extracts from the *Western People* of July and August of the current year will illustrate this abuse. In order to force the population of Knock More to contribute to the membership and funds of the League, the local branch passed the following resolution, which clearly shows by its routine character how habitual is this desecration of the places of public worship:—

That a list of all parties in the different townlands who have no joined the League be handed in and read this day month *outside the*

chapel gates. All committee members are requested to have correct lists, and we hope the missing names will be very few in the parish, as one shilling will not make them rich or poor.

In a similar manner at Glen Corrib at the August meeting of the local branch of the United Irish League, *the parish priest being in the chair*, just as Bishop O'Donnell, of the Congested Board, is in the treasurer-ship of the League parliamentarians, the following resolution was adopted in the same routine way to utilise the place of public worship for the promulgation of the black lists of the intimidation conspiracy:—

That any eligible householders in this side of the parish who refuse to pay the annual subscription shall have *their names posted on the chapel gate*, published in the *Western People*, and read at the public meeting, so that the people may distinguish the black sheep and hold them up for a public criticism.

In what sense can the charitable precepts of Christianity be understood in those districts of League flocks and pastors when even the edifices of Christian prayer and praise themselves are habitually used for the holding up of "black sheep" denounced by the League agitators to the menace of the boycott and the bludgeon? I am perfectly certain that there are a hundred millions of Catholics on the continent of Europe to-day who would be utterly unable to recognise the perpetrators of such sacrilegious intolerance as participants in the same religion and morality.

To bring home completely to non-Irish readers the full significance of the League black list in Ireland, I quote this extract from the report of the Athenry branch in the *Connaught Champion* of the 1st June of the current year:—

Several of the traders present asked that a list should be given to each shopkeeper, so that all would be made aware of who were to be supplied and who were not.

We must not suppose that this eagerness of the traders present ought to be interpreted as an indication of any excessive cruelty on their part. In most

cases it merely meant that for their own protection from the boycotting League beloved of the Congested Districts Board the wretched traders of Athenry wanted to know exactly whom they were to join in starving, so that at any rate they should not make any unnecessary victims. I have not heard that any of the prelates or pastors of the Congested Board have employed the fulminations of the Church against such outrage on humanity. A still graver use of the black list, for the purpose, viz., of intimidating what is called the Bench of Justice in Ireland, may be appended in this place. On the 12th June last fifteen cattle raiders were charged at Lisarrow Petty Sessions, county Roscommon, and as the magistrates actually on the Bench were divided in opinion, the case was adjourned to the next court day. There was intense indignation among the local leaders at the absence of a number of Land League magistrates, whose plain duty was unhesitatingly assumed to require the instant acquittal of the culprits. As a result of this indignation the *Roscommon Herald*, an organ of the League, published three days afterwards a *black list of the guilty magistrates* who had dared to be absent from their supreme judicial duty of absolving Land League criminals. Here are the terms of the denunciation :—

The chief comment at the termination of the proceedings was the absence of Mr. Hubert Martin, J.P., Mr. Connell, J.P., Mr. T. A. P. Mapother, D.L., Chairman Roscommon District Council, and Mr. John Fitzgibbon, chairman of the county council, any of whom, had they attended, could have set the defendants at liberty.

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There is no qualification of a Government institution fulfilling the functions of the Congested Districts Board more absolutely essential than to be fair to all political parties and to be free from the influence of all party agitators, especially of such as are active and virulent in carrying out their agitation. Now in

this respect it is to be profoundly regretted that the leading officials and the vast majority of the most active and influential agents of this Board, which distributes such large sums of public money among electors and non-electors in Ireland, form a vast machine of party politics, and that, from its leading members down to the most subordinate, its agents and officials are for the most part the emissaries and firebrands of a violent political and social combination directed against large classes of other Irishmen. If the chief of the Board were Grand Master of the Orange society and order, if the vast majority of the agents whose advice and selection directed the patronage of the Board were Orange chaplains and clergymen, it is needless to dwell upon the storm of discontent and indignation which would be excited throughout the country. Even if all those Orange leaders and agents meant to act with the most scrupulous fairness and equity, the fact would remain that the whole influence and prestige of this great taxation-spending organisation would be felt to be on the Orange side and in the Orange interest.

I express no party preferences, but I maintain it is simply unendurable and scandalous that the chief members of such a public board should be the most active and most influential leaders of a social and political confederacy directed against the action and opinion of other Irishmen. How can you have, with any semblance of fairness, at the head of such a board an ex-chairman of convention of the United Irish League and co-treasurer of the United Irish parliamentary party? There is no question about the sincerity and earnestness of this partisan leader. In the constituencies under his control he opposes every candidate who does not accept the mandates of the League, even such universally respected characters as T. D. Sullivan, the amiable poet, and Mr. Arthur O'Connor, long a deputy chairman of the House of

Commons, and a most distinguished member of the Home Rule party. But the constituencies from which these respected Irishmen were chased are precisely among those in which this thorough partisan is associated with the distribution of thousands of pounds of public money in connection with the Board under investigation. Nor is this all. It is really no wonder that the Congested Districts Board merits the name of "The Chief Branch of the United Irish League." Practically the whole of the vast body of political clergymen who are the chief agents and counsellors in the distribution and allotment of the Board subsidies are active and often violent advocates of the methods of the party of boycott and "redistribution of property," to quote the benign words of the episcopal document I have already submitted to the reader.

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To give a few more illustrations, which might be multiplied by hundreds, the *Sligo Champion* of the 3rd November, 1906, reports that a meeting of the Drumlease branch of the United Irish League was presided over by a clergyman in passing a vote of thanks to "the manly action" of certain merchants who refused to supply boycotted men. The *Connaught Leader* of the 29th September, 1906, reports a meeting of the Woodford branch, presided over by a clergyman, at which a member of Parliament called upon the people to hunt certain boycotted men and to make "it as warm for them as it could be made." At a League meeting in North Glenties, in the very heart of the so-called congested districts of Donegal, held on the 21st October, reverend canons, monsignors, and parish priests were chairman and speakers. The *Connaught Leader* of the 15th September, 1906, reported that the reverend president of the Woodford branch threatened to quit the United Irish League, unless it expelled the secretary of the

branch for the crime of keeping as a weekly tenant a man who worked for a boycotted firm of sawmill owners, and the secretary was accordingly expelled on the motion of a clergyman! At a United Irish League meeting held at Swinford on the 10th September, 1906, five political parish priests were among the speakers, and a dozen parish priests and curates supported the League by their presence. *All through the territories of the Congested Districts Board, from Donegal to Kerry, the United Irish League is predominantly a clerical organisation; and the priests, who, especially in the Parish Committee organisation, are the advisers and agents of the Board in its distribution of public funds, are everywhere the vigilant followers and emulators of their venerated chief, the chairman of United Irish League conventions and treasurer of the United Irish League Parliamentary Fund.*

When the Commission visited the west, for the purpose of witnessing the enthusiasm with which the benefactions of the Board are regarded and of receiving the evidence which had been prepared by the clergy, they might have usefully inquired among the Sligo patrons of congestion for the political clergyman who presided over the Glencar branch of the United Irish League on the 1st July, 1906, when, as the *Sligo Champion* reports, the branch and the reverend president devoted their attention to stigmatising "a car owner from Killasnett Branch, who attends the Sligo market on Saturdays, and had Towneymoyle grabbers for the occupants of his car on a recent occasion." This reverend pillar of congestion had actually the courage to support an infamous resolution, passed by the branch, which even threatened a young girl, as follows: "If this gentleman repeats this conduct his name will get full publicity, *together with the name of the schoolmistress who accompanied them on the occasion.* The conduct of John

M'Loughlin, of Baldy, together with his family, for aiding and assisting the Towneymoyle grabbers, was strongly referred to." I can only presume to suggest that it might have been instructive to visit also the Congested Board clergy and United Irish League Branch at Drumkeeran, in the heart of the scheduled districts of Leitrim, in which, as well as in the neighbouring district of Drumshambo, a merciless refusal to supply the necessaries of life to all under the ban of the League has been enforced on the local shopkeepers by vigilance committees especially chosen "to keep an eye on people dealing or keeping company with obnoxious individuals and to report all cases to our meetings." In the same district the Commission might have remembered, but studiously ignored, that every jury has refused to convict members of a mob of 600 leaguers who, "with wild threats of murder," tore away the food from the Brady boys, though they had walked twenty miles to bring it to their boycotted and starving parents. Well might Mr. Justice Kenny wonder "if this could be a Christian country"! Where was the civilising influence of the Congested Board and its reverend patrons? I have no hesitation, on the contrary, in saying that the influence of the Congested Board directly stimulates the popular passions by the use of the public funds and by the demands for larger and larger measures of compulsory expropriation. Meantime members of the Board go about contrasting their generous use of other people's money with the conduct of owners and occupiers "who never did anything for the people"! I have the profoundest reverence for the religious clergyman, but the political clergy simply pursue the objects of the boycotting League of which they are chiefs. More exactly speaking, the Board, like the League itself, is an instrument in the hands of the power which has made the "redistribution" of property in

Ireland the very foundation of its expected supremacy.

I enter into no criticism of the United Irish League policy. It may or may not be quite right "to redistribute by legal compulsion the landed property of owners and occupiers in Ireland." But it cannot be right that the agents and leaders of this social war should be endowed with the prestige and influence which belong necessarily to the distributors of thousands sterling of public taxation. It is freely said that at least thirty members of Parliament are elected in the west of Ireland by the influence of the clergymen, from bishops to curates, affiliated to the Congested Districts Board and the Agrarian League. One of the most clerical of these parliamentary persons, when opposing so respected an Irishman as Captain Shaw-Taylor at Galway a short time ago, did not hesitate to describe him, in public meetings adorned by much clerical support, as "a black spawn of the Cromwellian brood," a very suggestive illustration of the spirit in which the redistribution of landed property is to be carried out by the members and supporters of the Board. This particular member of Parliament enjoys the very closest friendship and constant patronage of the most influential members of the Board. How could any political candidate hope to succeed in a poverty-stricken constituency in Galway, Mayo, or Donegal, when opposed by a League nominee supported by the distributors and masters of all the public subsidies as well as all the clerical influence for hundreds of square miles around?

I maintain that, unless an independent and impartial lay organisation is in every case substituted for this clerico-revolutionary Board, a sordid and mendicant social war will continue to rage within its jurisdiction. Whatever may be the legitimate objects of such a board, let them be the business of a lay department, impartial and unsectarian, in some

central Irish administration. The present possessors of such immense powers of corruption and intimidation have no real interest in promoting peace in Ireland, at least until no influential class exists in the country except their own confederacy.

The complicity of the political priesthood in agrarian crime is acknowledged to be further illustrated by the cessation of cattle driving, which followed Mr. Birrell's promises of anti-educational legislation in conformity with the demands of the Foreign Mission in Ireland. The most experienced Irish correspondents pointed out that the obedience of the cattle burglars to the command of the priestly leaders increases, instead of relieving, the seriousness of the situation. The same hands which now signal "Slow down" can revert to "Full speed ahead."

"Of all the signs and portents of this latest crusade of the United Irish League, the sudden cessation is the most disquieting. It is a further proof of the power of the priests. Mr. Birrell has recently visited Cardinal Logue, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that as the result of their deliberations the cattle-drivers were checked in their game. There is a great deal of anxiety in Nationalist circles just now that a "chance" may be given to Mr. Birrell. The respite from the worries of open acts of violence is a concession from the priesthood. They, of course, are greatly interested in the establishment of a Catholic university."

What a compliment to the honour of a Dublin Castle administrator to conceive him capable of placing the accomplices of the cow-beaters in the Governing Senate of a University. The cow-beaters themselves pay Mr. Birrell such compliments. At Longford on 12th January of the current year, both J. P. Farrell, M.P., and J. Phillips, M.P., said that "to give Mr. Birrell a chance, they should stop cattle-driving at present, but if he neglected his promises (!), the hazel would be used more strongly than ever."

PART IV.

LEADING CAUSES OF POVERTY AND DEPOPULATION.

AGRICULTURAL SLOTH.

“Irish farmers would say that tillage would not pay; but that was absolutely untrue. Tillage would pay in Ireland, if they worked as people did in England and Scotland. . . . Neither the climate nor the soil was better than ours. . . . Tillage would pay us also, if we till scientifically, and if we are as industrious as they.”

Most Rev. Dr. Boylan, Bishop of Kilmore.

THE CHURCH INCUBUS.

“Catholic Belgium has one archbishop and five bishops; if it was staffed according to population on the episcopal scale of Ireland, it should have ten archbishops and sixty bishops.”

CLERICAL DICTATION.

“We request the district councillors to refuse their support to any candidate who will not produce a letter of character from the priests of his parish.”

Mandate of the Priests of Claremorris.

PEASANT PROPRIETORS AND GOMBEEN MEN.

“When you have parcelled out all the land in Ireland you will still have failed to make agriculture pay. You will have created a nation of bankrupt peasant proprietors who, instead of owing rent to rapacious landlords, will be up to the ears in debt to still more rapacious ‘gombeen’ men. Then your troubles will begin all over again, only worse than ever.”

C. E. Hands in “Daily Mail.”

CLERICAL BOYCOTT OF LAY TEACHING.

“The convents teach the girls as the colleges teach the boys, and between them the secondary education of Ireland is one huge machine for bringing money into the coffers of the religious orders.”

Seamus O'Muricaha in London School of Economics Magazine.

THE EDUCATIONAL CRIMES OF THE CONVENTUAL ORDERS.

“The secondary schools system in Ireland is a repulsive system. It does not aim at education, but at turning the boys and girls into money-making machines.”

Right Hon. Mr. Birrell.

THE OMNIVOROUS CONVENT.

“Monasteries are everywhere. Ireland is fast becoming the home of old men and women—and monasteries. And she must maintain it all—the regular clergy, the secular clergy, the convents and monasteries.”

Seamus O'Muricaha in London School of Economics Magazine.

THE ALLIANCE OF THE PRIEST AND THE ANARCHIST.

“Join us in overthrowing the ascendancy of the classes.”

Manifesto of the Bishop of the Board.

CHURCH BUILDING AND POPULAR MISERY.

“At this moment huge sums are being collected for the cathedral at Killarney, while within a stone's throw of the Bishop's Palace there are lanes which might not be tolerated in a West African village.”

The Peasant and Irish Ireland, December 14, 1907.

SUMMARY OF LEADING CAUSES OF POVERTY AND DEPOPULATION.

I SHALL deal in this Fourth Part with a number of the leading causes which, operating over the whole of Ireland, mainly produce those results so absurdly and misleadingly described as congestion.

(1) The first of these leading causes of which I speak is the influence of agrarian agitation and agrarian legislation in breaking the very springs of industry and diminishing or destroying the demand for industry, with the necessary consequence of increasing unrest and steady depopulation. When we had agrarian agitation alone the interference with industry was serious. If we could have had the agrarian agitation alone, without the Gladstonian legislation, we should undoubtedly have many evils to chronicle. But it was only the union of these two influences, the Land League anarchism and the Gladstonian land courts, which was competent to produce the condition of Ireland as we see it to-day, especially since the anarchism of the League has been reinforced by the funds and policy of the Congested Board.

(2) A cause of popular ruin and degradation of the gravest character is the existence and extension of the personage known in Ireland as "the gombeen grocer," or money-lending shopkeeper, almost invariably combining the sale of intoxicants with that of less injurious commodities, and who makes use of his own comparative wealth and the poverty and shiftlessness of his customers in order to establish a system of lending at exorbitant interest, either in money or in the cost of goods, which has involved

three-fourths of rural Ireland in a net of paralysing usury exceeded in few of the most backward countries in the world. This monstrous evil, which perhaps outpasses in mischief every influence save one other alone, has been practically ignored by legislation and by its creature, the Congested Districts Board.

(3) In the special circumstances of Ireland, where there is no legal protection against forms of extortion that are the object of constant solicitude on the continent of Europe, I believe that the establishment of peasant proprietorship will fail to check depopulation and will give rise to other evils in excess of those which peasant proprietorship was supposed to remove.

(4) Some defects and evils of Irish character, as that character has been developed by the Political Churchman and the agrarian agitator, must also be recorded, if for no other reason than that they are systematically ignored by all the panacea-mongers whose instrument has been the Congested Districts Board. I refer particularly to the popular training in ignorance; the development of a sordid and short-sighted selfishness at the expense of children and employees alike; the work-shy frame of mind and body in what are called the industrial classes; the absence of housekeeping in the Irish home; the disposition towards sloth and mendicancy produced by the prevalence of clerical begging under all kinds of pretexts; the prevalence of the drink habit and the drug habit, including in the latter what may be called the poison tea habit; the general existence of uncivilised and insanitary conditions of life, which, commencing in the depressing unhealthiness and dirt of the clerical primary school, seem to increase with increasing growth, until the peasant obstinately refuses to devote an hour to sanitary work, even although he have hundreds of hours absolutely free from all work whatever, etc., etc.

(5) A cause of depression and pauperisation of the

first class is also afforded by the exaggerated numbers, and consequent expense, already noticed, of the enormous Church establishment, not the Established Church so familiar in the diatribes of political rhetoricians a couple of generations ago, but the far more real burthen and incubus of a bloated growth of clerics far beyond the religious needs of the country, outrageously exceeding the most lavish establishment of such institutions in foreign Catholic countries, detached from all control by public opinion to a degree unknown elsewhere, and absolutely insatiable in its absorption of the wealth of the country on every conceivable and inconceivable pretext. All the exactions of absenteeism are exceeded or perpetuated in this vast evil, whether we look to the enormous sums levied for non-productive persons in Ireland, or to the enormous sums which are extracted from Ireland for use or misuse abroad. The functions of religion are sacred and indispensable to national well-being. The minister of religion who is truly a minister of religion is an economic benefactor as well as a spiritual guide. But it is in neither of these aspects that we have to consider the special evil in question in Ireland.

(6) An evil which demands the largest and keenest inquiry is, perhaps above all, that most incurable wrong to a nation involved in the systematic action, the conspiracy we may say, of a dominant section in the popular Church of a country to overturn the bases of society with the object of substituting its own control, its domination, and its ownership—we might almost say its sovereignty—for the lay social classes which have existed for centuries. There are in Ireland, fortunately, hundreds of religious clergymen who are ministers of religion above all things, who are devout, zealous, and unambitious. The further inquiry is pushed, however, the more evident it will become that a formidable section in all ranks of the

popular Church in Ireland has aimed, and continues to aim, at nothing else than the dissemination of agrarian and social unrest *until every class has been destroyed or broken which could check or limit the preponderance of the political Churchman*. From the first intimidatory notice issued by a Land League branch to the last benediction on cattle-raiding breathed by a congested districts cleric, the part of the Political Churchman in sowing and spreading the unrest which has depopulated Ireland and enriched the sacristies is clear, evident, and incontrovertible, no matter what may be the denials or the denunciations of the reverend anarchists.

(7) Finally, the work of the Congested Districts Board, often even its benevolent work, is intimately connected with, and directed by, the ecclesiastical oligarchy to such an extent that it has long since become their most efficient instrument in the national unsettlement by which they have profited, and through which they expect to triumph.

I shall deal in some detail with these various heads in the subsequent pages. I need hardly add that I never expected the Arranged Commission to pay the slightest attention to such views. Their partisanship has long since discarded all veils. They hardly closed their sittings when their Bishop of the Board ran off to join Mr. Redmond at the abortive conference with Mr. W. O'Brien. Bishop O'Donnell is the real leader of the League. Mr. Redmond is only Mr. John Dillon's echo, and Mr. John Dillon is only the speaking trumpet of Maynooth. Yet, until the Bishop became member of the millions-spending Board, he was a political nobody, as a religious bishop ought to be.

Notes and Illustrations.]

INSTRUCTIVE FACTS AND AVOWALS.

“Join us in overthrowing the ascendancy of the classes.”

Manifesto of the Bishop of the Board.

“Make the country as hot as hell for the enemies of the people.”

Speech of Parish Priest, July 21, 1907.

“The Land League programme is ours . . . We want the maintenance of the Congested Districts Board.”

Declaration of delegate of Central Council of United Irish League to the Commission.

“The land war must go on. We must have a menacing agitation.”

Manifesto of Leader of United Irish League.

“I, as commissioner, entirely concur that the Board should have purchase powers for the relief of congestion throughout all Ireland.”

Statement of the Bishop of the Board.

“The amount of land required for a systematic redistribution can only be settled by legal compulsion.”

Most Rev. Dr. O'Dea, Bishop of Clonfert.

“In Ireland as a whole there is not the desire on the part of the young men to work on the farms, even when there is plenty of remunerative work to be done. . . . In Great Britain farm labour is considered much more dignified than in Ireland. . . . People have been taught that an improvement of the farm may mean increase of rent. . . . It is quite a misuse of the term to call the operations of the western peasants agriculture.”

Evidence of Professor Campbell.

“In Irish agricultural life there is beyond question a tendency to leave the land.”

Evidence of Mr. Fletcher, Assistant Secretary to the Department of Agriculture.

“Relatively to their income, the sum spent by the people of the congested districts on tea and tobacco is enormously large.”

Evidence of Mr. Lawson Micks, late Secretary to Congested Districts Board.

“If the Irish people would consume more fish I know no reason why more should not be caught. . . . The Arran fishermen used to send their fish by steamer to Galway, but often there was no buyer there.”

Evidence of Rev. Mr. Spottswood Greene, Inspector of Irish Fisheries.

“Small proprietorship in France and Belgium has been the work of centuries. . . . The worst result of the artificial introduction of the small proprietor into Ireland will be to reduce agrarian pauperism to a system.”

M. de Molinari in the “Journal des Débats.”

“The farmers run up long bills with their traders. . . . Such money-lenders are often publicans. . . . The borrower can hardly do less than drink. . . . Twenty-five per cent. added on for six months credit was not uncommon.”

Evidence of Mr. Russell, Supervisor of Agricultural Banks.

“The system leads to deterioration of the land, the discouragement of improvements, and to perjury in the courts and demoralisation of the worst description.”

Evidence of Mr. Commissioner Finucane.

AGRARIAN LEGISLATION AND AGITATION: HOW THEY IMPOVERISH AND DEPOPULATE.

THE LAND COURT FARCE — THE FARMERS EXPEL THE LABOURERS — WITNESS - BAITING AGAIN — THE “TABLET” ON UNDERCULTIVATION — A BISHOP’S PROTEST.

WITH regard to that twofold influence of inconsiderate legislation and restless agitation in depressing and depopulating the country, I would call attention, in the first place, to the general effect of the Gladstonian Land Acts. The provision in the Gladstonian land code that all rents were liable to reduction at the end of every period of fifteen years necessarily resulted in a widespread effort to obtain the reduction by exhibiting the impoverishment of the land. A farmer who kept his land in heart, who manured, and ploughed, and employed labour diligently and extensively, saw himself, as he was easily led to believe, injured by the prospect that no reduction of rent court would ever reduce the rent upon fields so fertile and productive. Of course, it would be argued in normal countries and normal conditions that if the farmer raised larger crops he would be better able to pay the existing rent than perhaps to pay a diminished rent out of diminished crops. But here the influence of anarchist agitation came in to develop the worst evils of the law. “Are you going to kill yourself, Michael Brown, in order to pay the landlord big money? Starve him out, man, and the court will give you the land cheaper, and before long you will have it for nothing. Better a few weeds and thistles

for a few years, in order to drive the whole of the landlords out of the country."

As a general rule, the Gladstonian land court acted exactly as was desired and predicted by the anarchist agitator. The farmer who could "make a poor mouth," as the rural phrase went, the man who neglected drainage and repairs, and let his land get covered with weeds, almost invariably received the sympathetic attention of the land court judges. "True for you, my poor man! How can you pay a big rent on such a bad farm? Mark down Mr. Michael Brown to have his rent reduced 25 per cent." That is a popular translation of tens of thousands of land court judgments in Ireland. The resultant mischiefs were almost endless. Loafing took the place of industry and became a habit. Inferior food and clothing entered into the part which the Land League farmer was taught to play; and the inferior food and clothing usually affected his dependants more than himself. He had ways and expedients, often spirituous ones, for filling the gaps of appetite. His children and his workpeople were scarcely cheered by the calculation that "in ten years we will have the land for nothing." They preferred to go to America at once, and they will never come back.

Though a Tenant Righter throughout the whole of my political career, I cannot speak too strongly of certain aspects of the land agitation and land legislation of the last quarter of a century in promoting disemployment and depopulation in Ireland. I remember very well going through a good deal of Leinster and Munster in the years 1883 and 1884 and listening to the expectations of the people, especially the labouring classes, upon the probable course of events after the Gladstone Land Act. I remember very well, while visiting my venerable friend, Mr. Richard Lalor, M.P. for Queen's County, how some most intelligent labourers expressed their

apprehensions of the future. "The farmers are everywhere saying that the only sure way to get the rents reduced every fifteen years is to keep from cultivating the land, and the Land Commissioners will have to lower the rents in consequence of the poorness of the land. *This means of course ruin to us.* No farmer will keep labourers on his farm if he doesn't want the farm to prosper. He will grow as little as he can in order to starve the landlords out." I heard similar remarks everywhere from most thoughtful and respectable men, and I have no doubt that the plan of "lowering rents by lowering the farm" more or less actively influenced hundreds of thousands of farmers, and that a corresponding loss of employment was the result to vast multitudes of labourers. This no doubt largely explains the loss of a million of inhabitants which has marked the agrarian agitation of the past twenty years.

One portion of the emigrants from Ireland during this period, namely the well-to-do classes who were driven from the country by the discomforts of agitation, also contributed to stimulate depopulation by the withdrawal of their demand for Irish commodities and labour. I have often spoken with members of the more artistic trades, from coach-builders to jewellers, who always complained that the loss of their old customers left them with no hope of supplying their place. Many of these trades have followed their old employers out of Ireland.

I was well acquainted with a county town in Ireland in which there was a respectable barber and hairdresser who derived a comfortable living from the custom of the more respectable inhabitants, in particular the members of the County Club, which was situated not far from the doors of his establishment. I visited that town and the old hairdresser after a lapse of many years. I found him in a state of extreme poverty and depression approaching despair.

I asked him how it was going since the old days, and he replied that trade was ruined, that he was dependent upon his son for a little living, but that he was sure that as soon as he was under the sod his son would leave Ireland and go to America. The agitation had driven the respectable class away. Nobody ever came to the County Club. The gentry were gone, and the barbers and hairdressers who were employed by the gentry must go also. In the same town I knew a working jeweller and watchmaker, a man of very considerable taste, who was patronised by large numbers of people, not only in the town, but in the county outside. I called on him, to find him old and broken-hearted, and heard from his lips the same tale. The old shop, he said, hardly ever sees a rich or comfortable customer. "We only do the smallest work for the poorest people. My sons keep the business going simply because they do not like to leave their old father, who is too old to emigrate, but well I know that as soon as I am gone my boys will put up the shutters and go to America." It is the same story in scores of other trades and callings. It is the same story repeated a hundredfold and a thousandfold throughout Ireland. The whole class of servants of better training, accustomed to work for good houses, are similarly being driven out of the country. Butlers, coachmen, housemaids, all have been deprived of service in the houses of the gentry, since the gentry are no longer able to live in the country. All these displaced domestics are now competitors for situations on the London labour market or elsewhere. Discouragement of industry, destruction of industry, emigration of industry, depression, and depopulation—that is the universal story of the results of the agitation.

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There are numerous tags and bits of important evidence before the Commissioners upon many causes

of the want of employment and the deterioration of the soil in Ireland, and if it had been open to the public to offer evidence freely to the Commission the volume of facts would have been enormous and convincing. But the managers and selectors of the affair took good care to discourage independent testimony by every means at their disposal, and in Dublin Castle the resources of trickery are manifold. A limited body of representatives of the landowners had to be heard, but their evidence was carefully discounted as the mere defence of accused persons. When men of national sympathies and independent views, like the author of "Economics for Irishmen," ventured to insist upon a hearing, then the hostility was furious and unashamed. After putting me off for five months and then making two separate appointments at separate dates, the non-inquiry faction broke both the engagements. Mr. Jordan, who sent the Commission evidence of the hostility of the priests to migration, has not been called as a witness notwithstanding; and Mr. Kenny testifies that, for daring to lift a corner of the veil, Mr. Jordan "has since then been strictly boycotted, his old associates refusing to speak to him, though knowing the truth of his statement; and I am told that the clergy are at work to get him discharged from his employment as petty sessions clerk."

Among the incidental sidelights on the reality of things, which could not be entirely excluded, was the evidence of Mr. Commissioner Finucane, of the Estates Commission, upon the practice of certain farmers to deteriorate their holdings with a view to reduction of rent. "The system," said Mr. Finucane, "leads to deterioration of the land, the discouragement of improvements, and to perjury in the courts and demoralisation of the worst character." As I have urged, all this means depopulation, affecting both the agricultural labourers, who are not wanted on the deliberately undercultivated farms, and the larger

shopkeepers, who see their best customers deprived of their means of purchasing commodities and driven across the ocean in increasing numbers. It means what is mendaciously called congestion, or the accumulation of masses of unemployed men in slum areas, who, instead of earning good wages on the rich soil of twenty counties, are made the objects of Congested Board almsgiving and State socialism, and the excuse for Ribbon lodge proposals for the confiscation of more and more Irish landowners.

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In complete corroboration of Irish observers is the testimony of a leader-writer in the *Tablet* of the 17th August last. I am careful to quote recent evidence. This sympathetic visitor to Ireland describes what he had actually to see and regret in the most fertile parts of Ireland, the spectacle of magnificent soil being deliberately neglected and wasted by the miserable farmers. Both tillage and cattle breeding were irrationally scarce in the very garden of the pleasant land. I give his picture of fertile Tipperary, at the same time asking the reader to reflect how speedily all the pretended embarrassments of the congestion humbugs would vanish if 50,000 migrant labourers were invited from Mayo and Donegal by the reformed farmers of a score of counties to earn good wages by raising rich crops on tens of thousands of under-cultivated acres.

The reader will also note the comments of this keen and kindly observer on the idleness of the country girls which follows the misuse of the system of creameries in vogue. Without instruction, without occupation, it is no wonder they drift to America—or the convent. “Our girls are good girls,” said a leading man in the south of Ireland, “but they are fit for nothing in the world but to scatter roses before a holy procession.” Widespread is the complaint of

young Irishmen that it is hard to find a girl who knows how to keep a house and help a husband. Again a convent cause of depopulation. The convent pupils are untrained to found Irish homes. A busy farmhouse might be the best domestic school and technical school for the future wives and mothers of the country. But the farmers prefer every idle method of making up for undercultivation, while they are taught to hope that more agitation will bring more idleness still. "Sure, we'll soon have all that the landlords have got. It'll be aisy to live when we have the big estates for nothing."

But it is time to quote the actual words of the English Catholic writer :—

As to crops, it is a constant surprise and grief to a visitor to this fertile Tipperary to find that there are none to bless. In a wide district, magnificently fit for wheat, an alluvial plain in which everything prospers in superabundance, in which the trees are giants, the pastures deep, there is not a single cornfield or barley-field; three fields of oats may be counted in many miles. *So rich is the soil that this "fat and well-liking" country might easily feed its leaner brothers.* No complexities of political economy can refute the plain fact that bread is wealth. The contentions as to what other things may or may not be wealth can never confuse this. *And this country looks thus irrationally poor, in spite of the cattle.* These are not few compared with those that graze on English fields, but they are few for this splendid land of streams. Welcome among their green meadows would be the soft bloom of corn, slowly ripening to the colour of a loaf; but the green is everywhere. What prospers well is that new industry the creamery, as to which the observer's pleasure is mingled with his regret to find that *the country girls, who used to work, are looking on idle while the machine works instead,* and are spending its earnings on picture hats.

* * * * *

As I have repeatedly said, while nothing is more deplorable than the political priesthood in every country, which gives up to factious agitation and pelf-hunting the position and influence received for the Gospel mission, all the more honour is to be paid to the ministers of religion who speak truth and fear not, who preach industry instead of confiscation.

In this connection there is a strenuous condemnation of the existing system of undercultivation in an address delivered in the beginning of July last by the Most Rev. Dr. Boylan, Bishop of Kilmore. It is true the good Bishop does not know, or ignores, every cause for the existing neglect of the fertile soil except the want of industry. Want of industry or deliberate waste, the uncultivated fields mean a depopulated and impoverished Ireland. An industrious Ireland would leave no excuse for the anarchist nostrums of the Congested Board. Here are the words of Bishop Boylan :—

He urged them also to encourage more agriculture, more tillage, in the country. He knew right well that farmers would say that tillage would not pay; *but he knew that was absolutely untrue. Tillage would pay if they worked as people did in England and Scotland.* The Redemptorist order had a house in Perth, and behind it was a very high hill. He had been over there recently, and from the top of that hill he saw thousands and tens of thousands of acres of tillage. There was very little grass, but he saw oats, wheat, barley, and all sorts of green crops; *and yet neither the climate nor the soil was better than ours.* They had, moreover, to pay much higher wages, and still it paid the Scotch farmers. They would not continue tilling if it did not pay. "It will pay us also," added his Lordship emphatically, "if we till scientifically, and if we are as industrious as they are."

Irish tillage would pay if the Irish worked like the Scotch, or the English, or the Belgians, or the French, or the Germans. And tillage means that there would be ample employment for every starving labourer between Cork and Donegal who preferred work to cadging and uncivilisation. He would have no need to migrate to English farms or Scotch farms. He could make good money on ten times ten thousand fertile holdings in his own land—providing the Irish farmers gave up undercultivation—whether he chose to take up his permanent abode south, east, or north, or whether he sent a portion of his wages to the cosy cabin by the sea where he would return in the intervals of sowing and reaping. But the Congested Folly

wants the estates of the landowners "to help us to nurse our poor people in habits of industry." And honesty as well?

* * * * *

As I have quoted the important evidence of Mr. Commissioner Finucane on the practice of tenants trying to get reductions of rent by cultivating their lands as badly as possible, it may be mentioned, in connection with this witness — himself an ultra-agrarian—that his expression of a doubt of the competency of the Congested Board upon another grave matter produced a display of discourtesy and browbeating on the part of a Board partisan on the pretended Commission of Inquiry which illustrates convincingly the sort of reception reserved for independent testimony. Land League and Congested Board champions like Bishop O'Donnell and Mr. Conor O'Kelly, M.P., should have had free access to the Commission of Inquiry for any evidence they had to produce, but to make them commissioners and judges of inquiry into their own special work was a piece of scandalous dishonesty on the part of the camarilla of Dublin Castle. Mr. Commissioner Finucane, who had been Minister of Agriculture for a long period in India, had expressed a decided opinion against the continuance of the present powers of Bishop O'Donnell's board for dealing with land purchase. His exact words are significant in the highest degree. I extract his testimony from the evidence.

MR. COMMISSIONER FINUCANE.—It being clear that two bodies should not go on purchasing lands simultaneously in the congested counties, the question is which of them should take over the whole of the work. It appears to me that a non-official body such as the Congested Districts Board, sitting periodically in Dublin or elsewhere, would not be a suitable agency for carrying out the scheme suggested.

"The Congested Districts Board not a suitable agency"! Then there were wigs, or rather mitres, on the green. The Bishop of the Board tried to jump

down the throat of the witness.* He was "irrelevant"; he was "delaying the Commission"; he was "wandering from the point"; he was "putting up a house of cards." He had been "very much out of the country," this a polite allusion to Mr. Finucane's long connection with agrarian administration in India, while the Bishop of the Board ought to have been absorbed by the spiritual cares of his huge and illiterate diocese.

Mr. Commissioner Finucane bore the storm with firm composure, but what a commentary on Dublin Castle's plan of packing commissions of inquiry with partisans who dislike independence! It is idle to blame the Bishop of the Board. The blame rests with the camarilla which put him where he ought never to have been.

* When the author of "Economics for Irishmen" gave evidence against the political clergy before the Commission, his treatment seems to have been not dissimilar from the above. He writes: "The Bishop, I regret to say, fell deeper into that state of mind which we would describe as rage had he not been a bishop."

It is to be observed that the Bishop of the Board's irritation may not be unconnected with the numerous traces, even in the arranged and selected witnesses before the Commission, of profound distrust of the Congested Board as it stands at present. Thus when another of the Board champions, the boycotting Commissioner, Mr. Conor O'Kelly, tried to get an opinion favourable to the Board from Mr. Brennan, the Vice-Chairman of the Sligo County Council, he received a painful shock.

MR. CONOR O'KELLY—Do you not think it would be better to leave it to the Congested Districts Board?

MR. BRENNAN—Well, I have not my heart and soul entirely in the faith of the Congested Districts Board. . . . The authority should be a representative authority.

Notes and Illustrations.]

THE WORST EVILS OF IRELAND—SOME EVIDENCE BY RELIGIOUS CLERGY.

A BISHOP AGAINST THE PERJURIES IN IRISH COURTS OF LAW.

I TAKE from a sermon preached by the late Bishop of Killaloe, Most Rev. Dr. M^cRedmond, as reported in the *Freeman's Journal*, this denunciation of the perjuries rife among witnesses, juries, and the so-called Morley magistrates, being the additions to the Bench initiated by Mr. Chief Secretary Morley, for the most part on the nomination of the political clergy :—

Referring to the terrible crime of perjury his Lordship said that while travelling in the county towns of North Tipperary and Clare he made it a custom to go into the courts of justice. He heard jurymen sworn to try cases according to the evidence before them ; he had heard witnesses invoke God's holy name in the most solemn manner to affirm the truth of their statements ; he had seen magistrates on the Bench—men sworn to administer justice to the public—and often, too often, indeed, he had seen men in these positions violate their oaths which they had taken in such a solemn manner.

A PRIEST AGAINST LOAN-GROCERS AND DEBASED MAGISTRATES.

At a sitting of the Congested Commission in Connemara a priest supplemented the foregoing denunciation of corrupt magistrates by a complaint of the combined evils of gombeenism and gombeen magistrates, which throws a lurid light upon the social and moral condition in the Congested Districts.

The loan-grocer, who allows or compels the improvident farmers to buy on usurious credit, is known in many degraded countries, but the loan-grocer-magistrates, "who back their own customers" in the cases before the Bench, are a rarer specimen of utter debasement:—

REV. FATHER J. FLATLEY, C.C.—The doings of the gombeen man, who is present in every relation of life, result in practical slavery. . . . All retail dealers in provisions should be excluded from district and county councils, but, above all, from the magisterial Bench. *Their presence on the Bench is an unmitigated evil*, economic, social, and moral, and their practices tend to destroy all confidence in the law. To extend their business *they habitually back their own customers in open defiance of evidence and law*. Throughout Connemara the competition to get on the Bench is most keen, and the object is the same in every case. This is an evil that entails misery and suffering far deeper and more extensive than many of which there is much public talk. The power of these people has its most vicious root in the credit system with the debtors on their books. *They and their friends must be voted on to every Board, and those bodies are worked entirely in their interest and against the interest of the people*. Some means should be adopted to end this, and I know none but the total exclusion of these people from the council and from the Bench. In Connemara the Bench is in a most debased condition.

In nine-tenths of the cases these Morley magistrates have been commended to Dublin Castle by the bishops and clergy—the Parish Priest Committees beloved of the Congested Board!

Honest Bishop M'Redmond is dead. What bishops have continued his crusade against judicial perjuries? Contemporary Ireland, the creation of the political priest, is saturated with perjury. Priests, magistrates, and members of Parliament hold public meetings to denounce juries suspected of respect for the sanctity of solemn oaths. The priests go from the meetings to the Parish Committees of the Congested Board to distribute the money of the taxpayers.

THE GOMBEEN GROCER AND HIS SPIRITUAL AND JUDICIAL ALLIES.

GOMBEENISM AND BAD FOOD — WHISKY AND HOLY
WATER—GOMBEEN MAGISTRATES—THE PUBLICAN'S
TILL AND THE COLLECTION PLATE — SIR H.
PLUNKETT'S REMOVAL.

A MOST potent cause of the waste, the drinking habits, and general helplessness so conspicuous in the pauperised districts is the personage who is called *the gombeen grocer*. The gombeen grocer is a shop-keeper who, besides letting his customers have their supplies on a long credit and long prices, also directly lends sums of money, both transactions representing a heavy addition to the burdens of the customer. By these means he obtains a complete mastery over his customers, who dare not offend their creditor by refusing any of the commodities, such as brimstone whisky, coarse tobacco, and rubbish tea, which he recommends for their purchase. The gombeen grocer is a potentate of evil hardly inferior to any other of the influences for ruin which pauperise Ireland.

Alcoholism, nicotinism, and the habit of the coarse tea drug, are everywhere part of the work of the gombeen grocer. I am assured that not less than twenty millions sterling annually are paid by the people for their indulgence in these three evils, which are pressed upon them by the usurious grocer whom they dare not refuse, even if they wish to, which is rarely the case. It has been represented to me by persons of the largest experience that the habitual drinking of the most infamous tea, which they not

merely infuse, but stew, for hours, is itself the most insuperable obstacle to overcoming the languor, apathy, and lack of brain power which are the consequences of a stupefying drug entirely unknown to former generations. Taken altogether, the popular wealth consumed by these three vices would not only far exceed the largest amounts of subsidies demanded for the congested fiction, but would vastly exceed the total of those rents that unscrupulous agitators describe as the only curse of Ireland, and would raise to competence and bodily and intellectual health the whole of that population whose depressing sorrows are the study of this sympathetic Commission.

I would ask attention for a single consideration. The success of the fishery enterprises subsidised by the Board necessarily depends upon the demand for the products of the fishing. If but a couple of million sterling annually out of the vast total spent on degrading drugs were available for the purchase of cheap and healthy fish, *there would be an immediate end of all the pecuniary embarrassments of Irish Fishery Boards and fishermen alike.* If the reverend ministers of religion, of whatever denomination, if the energetic ministers of the Crown who are always undertaking to be saviours of society, would only turn their attention from the promotion of social war and the encouragement of national mendicancy in order to divert the people from their loathsome drugs, results would be achieved in Ireland which will never be achieved on the present system.

Unfortunately, the gombeen grocers, who now number in their ranks the large majority of the sellers of groceries and vendors of spirits in Ireland, are quite aware that it is only with the most extreme reluctance that a large portion of the reverend clergy will ever proceed to serious hostilities against them. *The spirituous liquor trade, with its branches and*

*alliances, contains by far the largest section of the wealthy parishioners throughout Ireland; and these wealthy parishioners, both in life and in death, are the most profitable and generous supporters of the clergy of all ranks and orders. From the large incomes earned by the intoxication of the flock the grocers and spirit merchants pay to the pastors of the flock generous tithes and dues far beyond the contributions of any other class of Irish society. Not only are their offerings to the clergy at the stated seasons of dues and collections the main source of the clerical incomes, but on every related occasion it is the drink money from the publican's till which supplies the richest contribution to the collecting plate. At charity sermons, when the preacher most in vogue does his utmost to excite the liberality of the faithful for some special object of clerical solicitude, it is the gombeen grocers, their families and friends, who fill the front seats of the temples, and contribute the large share of the pieces of gold and the greasy bank notes which agreeably attest the persuasiveness of the preacher and the devotion of a congregation. In the columns of subscribers towards the foundations of new churches and convents that are continually published in the *Freeman's Journal* and other organs of edification, the gombeen grocer figures in scores and in hundreds. When the faithful make up a purse for the bishop on his triennial visit to Rome, it is the grocer and the spirit merchant who take from the tills of their trade the largest plenishing of the episcopal requisition. In the opinion of the venerable donees, "the money does not smell."*

I know a woman of great wealth who is the owner of a couple of the most flourishing dens of drunkenness and vice in the most debased and crowded quarters of a great Irish city. In virtue of her abominable wealth, she possesses a sumptuous villa in a select country district; and there she is accustomed

to be honoured for weeks at a time with the visits, which are in themselves benedictions, of a great and popular prelate who is also a great and popular politician of extreme agrarianism and educational monopoly.

Nor are the gombeen grocers slow to resent interference with their business by the reverend clergy who are indebted to them for the best or largest part of the comforts which they do not disdain. A couple of months ago I remember that a mission of zealous priests belonging to one of the poorer and more evangelical orders entered the town of Clare Galway, and for a whole week preached with religious and patriotic indignation against the curse of intoxication; and they denounced the sellers and the drinkers of spirituous liquor. They announced that they would hold a special meeting at which all the men and women of Clare Galway would be invited to take a solemn pledge against the consumption of intoxicating drink. The sermon on the evening of the pledge formed an impressing demonstration of the action of the good missionaries. Men and women in hundreds vowed to avoid for the future the drink and the drink-house. But the scene had an amusing sequel. The holders of licences to sell intoxicating drink met in indignation to protest against this extraordinary interference of ministers of religion with their wealth and livelihood. Nor were they content with expressions of indignation. They passed a resolution to pay no more dues to the clergy until the clergy should cease to interfere with the business of intoxication and pauperisation in the town of Clare Galway.

There may be a few indignant missionaries. There may be the demonstrations of temperance societies and Father Mathew societies, for the most part composed of excellent persons who never were tempted to drunkenness in their lives. But it will take a national effort of unprecedented extent and

gravity on the part of the popular clergy in Ireland to bring them to oppose seriously their principal paymasters, who are at the same time the principal paymasters of the political agitations which the clergy maintain throughout Ireland. The old jest known to the House of Commons, that Irish parliamentary punch was just "whisky and holy water," corresponds to the gravest and most hopeless incident of the clerico-political situation in every Irish county and town.

A gombeen man is the worst sort of usurer. A gombeen publican or a gombeen grocer—the two professions are frequently combined—has special facilities in Ireland for usury in connection with his trade opportunities. Almost any accident of rural existence may bring the farmer or labourer into the net of the usurious dealer. Popular banks for lending money in an emergency to small customers on credit, based on local knowledge, have been almost unknown in Ireland. Their establishment would have been the greatest work of Christian charity, as well as sound economy, which could be inaugurated in any Irish village. But there was literally nowhere for the small man who wanted a loan of two or five or ten pounds except the counter of the whisky trader, whether or not he dealt in tea and sugar, soap and candles, besides. So to the gombeen grocer the wretched borrower went. Of course he had to pay a monstrously usurious interest; but, even with that monstrous interest, the loan was seldom repaid in cash, and never only in cash. From the moment that the poor man fell under the yoke of the grocer money-lender he lost the power of choosing what commodities he should buy, or whether or not he should buy commodities at all. "He was expected to buy for the good of the house," the house of the money-lender.

And the gombeen grocer was not only willing, but

anxious, that the customer should buy goods on credit. Buying goods on credit forced the poor debtor to pay any price which the money-lender might choose to exact for his whisky, tea, and sugar, etc. The worst tea, the strongest in tannin and every other poison, which could be had on the London market for eightpence or tenpence a pound, was debited to the buyer on credit at 2s. 6d. and 3s. a pound. Naturally the gombeen grocer directed the choice of his debtors towards the purchase of the commodities which paid him best, notably whisky and tea. If the debtor did not buy enough of whisky and tea to suit the gombeen grocer's estimate of his circumstances, then the original loan and the subsequent purchases on credit gave the usurious trader ample opportunity for putting on the screw. As a result the poor farmer or labourer could never get out of the debt of the gombeen grocer, and must continue buying usury whisky and usury tea in addition to paying the exorbitant interest on the original loan.

Where is the possibility for the higher life in a townland or a number of townlands which have been enmeshed in interminable obligations to the ring of local usurers? And while the poor debtors stand or kneel in the bleak back parts of the local church on Sunday, they have the pleasure of seeing their blood-suckers walking up to occupy the best places close to the sanctuary and basking in the welcome of the pastors of the church. Every department of local life in Ireland over vast districts is tainted by the gombeen man, the spirit grocer who lends money or credit, and who possesses a following of real bondslaves to do his bidding in social and political affairs. The gombeen grocer shares with priest and bishop the election of parliamentary representatives.* He is

* Quite recently the well-known General Sir William Butler, speaking before an Irish Catholic association, gave this emphatic

often as powerful as the priest in staffing the magisterial bench with dispensers of justice of his own kidney. The principal business of justices of the peace, according to these gentry, is to promote the welfare and authority of gombeen grocers. When a seller of whisky gets into trouble with the law, when a would-be seller of whisky wants a licence to open a public-house, he draws upon his bondslaves, and upon the politicians whom he has manufactured, and the priests whom he has endowed out of his vice-filled till, to help him out of the trouble or to set up a brother or cousin or other kinsman as a licensed trafficker in intoxicant poisons. It is very seldom that Catholic prelates in Ireland venture to deal seriously with this formidable evil.

"Blood is thicker than water," says the proverb, and not only the priesthood, but the "magistracy" and the publicanhood are usually connected by ties of kinship as well as by mutual considerations of profit. Occasionally a voice of protest speaks from the sacerdotal ranks; and a short time ago such a noble voice was heard from the lips of the late Most Rev. Dr. M'Redmond, Bishop of Killaloe, who took occasion to describe with becoming seriousness the crimes of perjury, subornation of justice, and degradation of the judgment seat which are bound up with

testimony to the ravages of the drink habit in Ireland: "What precise sum of money is handed over annually to the British Treasury by the Irish drinking man I do not know, but of this I feel sure, that, whatever that colossal sum may be, its vast total is more than twice paid by Ireland in the loss of labour, of health, strength, virility, and will-power, which that drink bill entails upon the people."

Of course the clergymen present received those remarks with appropriate applause, which will not prevent them from treating the publican and the spirit grocer as the foremost and most honoured supporters of Church finance in their respective parishes. The priest in the drink-seller's parlour receiving a subscription, the congregation in the drink-seller's shop wasting health and money—that is the conjunction to which Sir William Butler did not allude.

the alliance of the spirit dealer and the spirit dealer's magistrates.

I take from the Irish newspapers of the time the fuller extract, abbreviated in *Notes and Illustrations*, from an account of the triennial visit of the prelate in question in his diocese of Birr:—

THE BISHOP OF KILLALOE IN BIRR—MAGISTRATES AND DRINK LICENCES.

Our Birr correspondent writes: "On Thursday his Lordship the Most Rev. Dr. M'Redmond, Lord Bishop of Killaloe, commenced his triennial visit to the united parishes of Birr and Carrag.

"On Sunday, after the first Gospel at last Mass, his Lordship, ascending the altar, preached a powerful and deeply impressive sermon before a crowded congregation. . . . Referring to the terrible crime of perjury, his Lordship said that while travelling in the county towns of North Tipperary and Clare he made it a custom to go into the courts of justice to hear any important cases that from time to time arose. He heard jurymen sworn to try cases according to the evidence before them; he had heard witnesses invoke God's holy name in the most solemn manner to affirm the truth of their statements; he had seen magistrates on the Bench—men sworn to administer justice to the public—and often, too often, indeed, he had seen men in these positions violate the oaths they had taken in such a solemn manner. Frequently he had to leave these courts a wiser but a sadder man. Again, his duties obliged him to travel a good deal through his diocese, and in the course of his drives he frequently asked what were the names of the people living in the houses that he passed. Often he got the reply, 'That man has been made a magistrate and signs "J.P." after his name.' 'I hope,' his Lordship would say, 'that he attends the court often and distributes justice fairly to the people.' The reply to his remark not infrequently was, 'Oh, he never goes to the court except he is canvassed to support a licence'! In concluding his sermon the Lord Bishop said that he found only too frequently that some magistrates did not go into court with the sole object of measuring out justice, but simply to please a neighbour, or perhaps they were urged to go by some more sordid motive."

Bishop M'Redmond's references to the magistrates, whose main judicial function consists in voting for the multiplication of drink licences, point to a graver cause of poverty and pauperism than the payment of rent or even the destruction of Irish export trade by

English protectionism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.* If such are the magistrates, who nominate them and commission them? Their recommendations are invariably backed by influential clergymen and politicians; but after all it is the Government in Dublin Castle, and not any landlord on his estate, who plant these allies of the publican and the spirit grocer from end to end of the country. And how rare are the episcopal or sacerdotal voices which are raised in protest against the alliance of the Bench and the whisky bar, the representatives of justice and the purveyors of crime, degradation, and starvation! If the Congested Fiction Commission could induce the ministers of popular religion to support the boycott of whisky with half as much zeal as the boycott of education, Irishmen might cease to spend on intoxication nearly double the annual rental of the island.

Instead of there being any tendency to check the ravages of the gombeen-grocers on the part of Dublin Castle and Maynooth College—the Siamese twins of Anglo-Irish administration—the credit shopkeeper has just won his greatest triumph in the compulsory

* I was glad to see that the papers published the evidence of the Catholic clergyman, thirty-seven years a curate in West Galway, describing the terrible curse which the gombeen grocer is to the whole population, and adding that men of this anti-social and almost anti-human class dominate not only the local boards and administrative councils, but the magisterial bench as well. Naturally, when the electors of a district become indebted to these harpies, all freedom of election is lost, and the gombeen man or his nominee is voted into every position in the gift of popular suffrage. And these drink-sodden boards and councils constitute, along with the congested districts clergy and the League parliamentarians, the main organisation for the systematic attacks upon freedom of cultivation and security of property.

Possibly the depressing maintenance of an estimable priest in the subordinate position of a mere curate for thirty-seven years is not unconnected with his honourable hostility to evils rampant in Church as well as State.

resignation of Sir Horace Plunket, who had made the emancipation of the Irish farmers from the shop-keeping usurers and thieves a main object of his remedial organisation of Irish agriculture. He had lent public money to co-operative societies of farmers for the purpose of teaching them to obtain commodities at something like a just price instead of the monstrous exactions of the loan-grocers and company, but the gombeen men, powerful in the organisation of the parliamentarians and in the councils of the clergy, who dip so largely into the publican's till, were able to bring "political pressure" to bear on Dublin Castle, where Sir Horace Plunket's position had been seriously shaken by his extremely moderate criticisms on political churchmen. Though Sir Horace Plunket did not hesitate to say that "unless co-operative credit was developed quickly, the new peasant proprietor was doomed," the generous founder of agricultural organisation was driven out of office. In a recent address to the body which he had created and directed, the dismissed reformer has revealed the victory of the Gombeen League :—

As Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture, he had consented to the Organization Society's using public money to teach the principles of combination to bodies of farmers. Mr. Russell also permitted this, but he objected to aiding with public monies societies which went into competition with country traders in tea, sugar, tobacco, and so forth. Sir Horace went on to argue that, if agricultural co-operation were really injurious to the interests of traders, *the task of proving this lay with chambers of commerce, and not with politicians.* The opposition to their movement came, however, from a small section of the trade, which had become abnormally powerful by their use of the political organization of the Nationalist party, a far more powerful machine than any business organization which they themselves could create. The result was that the political organization of the country, while nominally representing the Irish farmer, was, in fact, only allowed to do for the greatest interest and industry in Ireland just so much as the smallest trader in the Irish country town would permit. *This was the whole plot of the tragedy.*

The Scotch doctrinaire who has been the tool of the cleric and the whisky usurer in preventing the liberation of the farmers, revealed the immensity of his ignorance or his subservience when he talked of his regard for the "country traders in tea, sugar, tobacco, and so forth." He might have added "intoxicants of all descriptions"; but then he is an advertised teetotaller.* It is precisely these "country traders" who rivet the farmers in chains of debt to habits of sloth and sottishness, resulting in chronic unthrift and insolvency. When the "new peasant proprietors," namely these besotted serfs of the truck-and-usury men have entered fully into the ownership of the Irish estates, what a helpless spoil they will present to the foreclosing of the spirit grocer and his spiritual allies! That is precisely what constitutes the impregnability of the gombeen citadels in Ireland.

*The extraneousness of what is politely called the governing element in Dublin Castle would be less noxious but for its evanescence. Those Welshmen, Scotchmen, Anglo-Indians, Yorkshiremen, etc., who flit across the stage of the Secretaryship, have never the time to make up for outside ignorance. They come as shadows, and as shadows they depart. Mr. Arthur Balfour is the only minister for Ireland who brought a distinct personality to his Irish office, and the succession to the Premiership was quickly fatal to his adventure. Every Secretary treads the same road and accepts the suggestions of the same environment.

THE PEASANT PROPRIETARY NOSTRUM— FREQUENT FAILURE AND DANGERS.

ANGLO-INDIAN FADDISTS—WHERE PEASANT PROPRIETORS
SUCCEED—UNKNOWN IN IRELAND—THE COMING
OF THE JEW—THE IRISH-AMERICAN LESSON.

THERE are said to be two parties among the promoters of peasant proprietorship on the Congestion Board. One party favours the plan because it destroys the classes which are independent of Churchmen, because it creates a class which is dependent on the Churchmen, and because "the liberty of testation," as practised in Ireland, makes certain that an increasing portion of the peasant property will pass to the Churchmen within a generation or two. The other party mainly consists of quasi-philanthropic theorists, raw Anglo-Indians and others, who are still in the stage when "Stuart Mill on Small Holdings" was accepted as the last word of economic wisdom, and who seem to believe that to secure the prosperity of any country you have only to chop it up into holdings of ten acres. These pundits are not shaken by the fact that India is a country of small holders, and that India presents the most desperate problem of agricultural famine and discontent in the entire world. To such an extent does their fanaticism proceed that it has come to be understood that their representatives on the Congested Board would not only cut up all the landlord estates in the country, *but that they are willing to apply the same surgery to all the larger classes of tenant holdings* which considerably exceed the area of their peasant ideal. In other words, we have the clerical aggression, which has

pushed beyond the limit of endurance of every country in the world, allied with the bureaucratic faddists, who have probably done as much injury to humanity as any body of avowed despots.

I shall deal later with the calculations of the clerical conspiracy. I admit that its calculations are perfectly well founded as Irish laws now stand. It is the whale which has every good right to expect that it will succeed in swallowing the Irish Jonah. But with regard to the Stuart Mill-Brahminee school, whose failure in India has made them oracles in Ireland, different considerations enter into the question. They really believe that when the national land has been chopped into mincemeat the future of the inhabitants must be that of the story-books: "and they lived happily ever after."

Let me admit at once that, given the necessary conditions, a nation of peasant proprietors can exist in a certain rude comfort and by a certain stubborn industry for a space of generations or even centuries where the soil and climate are fairly good; where the custom of peasant proprietary has entered into the traditions and life of the people; where an intense spirit of local patriotism prevails, enhanced by an intense spirit of local neighbourliness, both making the cultivators reluctant to quit the old spot; where education in the modern sense of the knowledge of books and newspapers is hardly existent, and where there is consequently neither knowledge of, nor belief in, the superior advantages of other countries; where emigration is unknown or regarded as almost impious; and where custom has made it a consecrated pleasure to carry out the hard routine of a small cultivator's life. In such circumstances considerable populations may subsist in rude comfort with few enjoyments, but few wants, and with an absolute abhorrence of going forth among strangers and enemies. This has been the condition of many communities in Europe and

Asia in all those countries and ages where revolutions, invasions, and general insecurity make the small cultivator feel that his best chance for life and property consists in staying quiet in the old home among the old neighbours.

But change all this. Let newspaper reading and similar influences bring into every little home the pictures of easily accessible countries in which the same labour gives a hundredfold material results; where there is moral and intellectual freedom corresponding with the new desires awakened by the new enlightenment; where there is no danger whatever attaching to the processes of immigration; and where, on the contrary, immigrants are welcomed and protected. Couple all this with an increasing desire for less work, better food, more amusement, more intercourse with other people, and there is a state of things which is absolutely certain to bring peasant proprietary very near to its deathbed, even in countries in which it has been a long-descended institution.

There never was peasant proprietary in Ireland. It has not existed in recent centuries under the system of landlords, middlemen, and cultivators. It certainly did not exist in Celtic times, under the lordship either of chief or clan. The great holder, the medium holder, the small holder, the free labourer, and the semi-serf existed in Celtic times, but not the peasant proprietary. You can have a flourishing peasant proprietary in Germany alongside of other classes, large farmers, landed proprietors, and, above all, numerous flourishing towns and cities making a constant demand for food supplies upon every class of rural markets. You may have it in Belgium, where, in addition to all the other advantages, you have city life developed to an extraordinary extent, so that the small holder can cultivate his land with the intensity of market gardening, in the certain knowledge of a constant demand for whatever he can sell

above the wants of his immediate family. And in all those countries in which peasant proprietary flourishes there is, in addition to all the favourable circumstances I have mentioned, this further one, which has almost totally disappeared from Ireland, that the peasant proprietor cultivates what he and his family eat and wear, that he tills in the first place for subsistence, and that he has not cultivated a taste for exotic products, which he must buy with good money before he can satisfy his want of food and clothing. His house bread is home-grown; it does not come from Chicago. His clothes are home-made, and not from the factories and shops of far-off empires. He prefers buttermilk and home-brewed ale to all the black tea of Assam.

How can you make a peasant proprietor out of a man who rejects, or who has never felt, the essential wants and sentiments of every flourishing community of peasant proprietors in the world? To educate a peasant proprietor's children you must have a peasant proprietor's education. I mean that the sons and daughters of small holders ought in the first place to be brought up to be useful members of a small holder community, if they are brought up to be anything at all, not mere loafers and idlers, ignorant alike of letters and of land, ignorant even of the commonest necessities of decent and healthy life, as is the case with the pupils of the priest-managed schools in Irish rural districts, especially if they are brought up—I allude to the females in particular—to be a sort of "walking ladies," full of devotions and little else, according to the stereotyped programme of convent schools. It necessarily follows that Irish children are good neither for tilling, nor sowing, nor thatching, nor cooking, nor any other of the fifty daily tasks which enter into the industrious life of small holders who are small holders indeed. Such a thriftless and helpless class easily becomes a permanent

horde of semi-mendicants, requiring aid, and encouraged to require aid, from the public funds of Congested Fiction Boards and similar bodies; but they can with difficulty become under any circumstances the prosperous population of an agricultural land, not to mention that in Ireland such a class is especially subject in mature life also to the depressing influences of that all-pervading priest rule which destroys the very possibility of free-will and free resolution.

I would be allowed to mention another danger which has recently come to Ireland, and which promises to affect in the gravest manner the welfare of an agricultural community. The agricultural communities in all countries are liable to the evils of a money-lending class, and I have referred to the evils inherent in Ireland in the native class of gombeen men or shopkeepers—usurers of all descriptions. But here is the place to remind the reader that during the past few years more than 20,000 foreign Jews have settled in Ireland, drawn by the opportunities of profit which Irish industrial disintegration affords to a trading which puts its mind in its work. The miserable backwardness of the middle classes in Ireland was enough in itself to stimulate the enterprise and immigration of the foreign Jews, who certainly cannot be blamed for seizing such an opportunity. But the fact remains that the Jews form the most formidable body of money-lenders which the world has ever seen, with natural gifts for the industry unequalled by any other race or class; that in other countries—such as Poland, which has many similarities with Ireland—the Jews have become the practical masters of the agricultural community of all ranks; that they are rapidly increasing in Ireland; and that both the disastrous legislation and the worthless customs of that country offer them an unrivalled field for their operations. Their itinerant packmen and

vendors on credit are already to be met in every country village, and their offers of credit are greedily accepted by an ignorant and unthrifty people, more accustomed to promise than to perform, but who will find it more difficult to cheat the Hebrew money-lender than the native landlord. At one of the sessions of the Limerick County Court I am told the Jews had recently issued six hundred summonses against rural debtors. Does the Commission imagine that emigration can be prevented from a country where the social superiorities are to be, soon perhaps, divided between the political priest and the Semitic dealer? However, this particular branch of my subject deals with mischiefs which are as yet only in the hatching.

To return to evils which are in full and malignant growth, I shall deal next with the dangers from what is called the "liberty of testation," which have reached colossal proportions in Ireland. Meantime, in view of the panacea of peasant proprietorship in vogue with Board and Commission theorists, I ask the reader carefully to consider the moral of the medical testimony in next page of Notes and Illustrations.

But the Irish-American lesson is most grave and unmistakable. I say elsewhere what the Irish-Americans can attain in civil life, after that merciless process, the survival of the fittest. But the lanes and tenements which show us exactly the poor Irish, as they land on the wharf, direct from the priest-ridden village and the priest-ridden school; that is the Irish-America which proves beyond misunderstanding the under preparation of the race for any scheme of agrarian self-help, like peasant proprietorship above all. America is the special field for agrarian proprietorship by cultivators. Millions of Germans, Scandinavians, English, Scotch, have rushed, and still rush, to occupy the limitless acres which invite the farmer and ploughman. If the Irish have sunk into the town slum, even in that bounteous soil of free

grants and growing markets, where is the likelihood of a contrary impulse amid all the energy-killing influences at home? Even allowing for the baneful pressure of the Tammany societies and similar pseudo-Irish organisations for decoying the immigrants—for the sake of their votes—to drift and stagnate in the fetid town areas, the inevitable reflection of the thoughtful observer must be: What utter disqualification for agricultural industry is rampant and dominant in Ireland!

No doubt that “the lying or exaggerated letters,” as an Irish popular authority justly calls them, which the emigrated Irish write to friends at home—often in the pay of American cheap labour agencies—play a large part in stimulating the outpouring of the Home Irish to the foreign shores. But why do the fugitives from Ireland never, or rarely, become tillers of the soil in America? Because they do not know, and do not like, the patient and difficult and monotonous work of agriculture either at home or abroad. *The Irish-American slum is the mirror of the Home Irish hate of agriculture.* As a trained witness, Professor Campbell, told the Commission, “the operations of the peasants in the West do not deserve the name of agriculture.” Give them the lands of Ireland to-morrow, and they will sell them to the priest and the nun for the passage money to America.

Notes and Illustrations.]

REVELATIONS OF THE MEDICAL SERVICE IN IRELAND.

MORE THAT THE ARRANGED COMMISSION DID NOT
EXAMINE.

AMONG the numerous and important classes of society which the Arranged Commission did not consult, but which any real Commission of Inquiry must have consulted, were professors, schoolmasters, doctors, members of Parliament, editors and journalists, all of whom are naturally conversant with the conditions of poverty or well-being in the community.

Among the most important of all sources of information for a Commission inquiring into social and hygienic conditions are unquestionably the medical officers charged with the supervision of the public health.

In this connexion the conscientious reader would find the most serious grounds for reflection, and indeed for dismay, in the Report on the Poor Law Medical Service in Ireland which was published by the *British Medical Journal* of the 26th of March, 1904. There can be read a record of the mentality as well as the physical condition and habits of the Irish poor, their pastors, and their elective representatives, which illustrates, among other things, the "influence for good" of the reverend persons, with whom Ireland begins and ends according to the views of the Board and the Commission. A very few extracts may lead the reader to consult the document itself.

THE GROWTH OF SECTARIANISM IN IRISH MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS.

The peasant took his seat upon the throne of Irish Local Government in 1898. . . . The election of medical officers, thus widened out, has lost all scientific, medical, or professional element. . . . To be clever surgeon, or sympathetic physician, or active sanitarian, is never mentioned. . . . *Everywhere the very idea of science is scouted, and everywhere inefficiency is accepted if the politics be right.* . . . Where does Ireland come in in all this struggle, and what of the ultimate Irishman of the hillside, sick unto death with disease? . . . Any person bringing forward complaints of an incompetent doctor would have to face the attacks of all his political friends. . . . The opposition to sanitation is so great that practically all members of the medical service in Ireland treated the whole of the sanitary duties as a huge joke—the saddest of jokes, for the *sanitary condition of Irish towns and villages is only on a level with a Chinese village.* . . . The Boards of Guardians treat so insultingly the young doctor who asks for more pay that every competent medical man wants to emigrate anywhere out of Ireland.

THE FILTH OF THE “CHINESE VILLAGES” OF IRELAND.

I traversed the wretched slums of the streets of the Irish towns and saw the nameless state of filth of these places. . . . The unutterable sanitary condition of these towns. . . . Loathsome and degrading surroundings. . . . No sanitary public opinion seems to exist. . . . If a sanitary officer did his duty and reported, no action followed. . . . Tuberculosis is rife among the peasantry, and typhus, evidence of the very climax of filthiness. . . . *The long succession of the low type of public-houses, which everywhere degrade the Irish towns and villages, line the streets in infinite numbers. The splendid newly built Catholic church rises among the wretched cabins of some of the poorest people in the world. The well built convent, the modern Christian brother's school, now and then the bishop's palace, stand forward on the sloping hillside.*

Is this the preparation for peasant proprietorship, O prelates of the Board and the Commission? Are these festering towns the likely markets, as in Belgium, Germany, and France, to stimulate and reward the intensive tillage of the small holding?

“LIBERTY OF TESTATION”—THE DEATHBED GRAB.

FRENCH LAW PROTECTS THE DEATHBED—NO PROTECTION IN IRELAND—THE CONSEQUENCE TO THE FAMILY AND THE NATION.

WITH regard to the pretended panacea of peasant proprietorship, I have expressed my conviction that it requires a large admixture of great and medium proprietors, or the presence of a large manufacturing population in the immediate neighbourhood, in order to obtain a successful result. The famous “magic of property” will not turn sand into gold, or even copper, except in the most unusual circumstances, if there be no neighbouring demand for products which will stimulate and reward the cultivation of the sand. Even such material encouragements may not always prevail against the repulsion which the sordid monotony of small peasant life tends to excite, in the peasant born, when once education and a knowledge of the larger world have found a way into the districts of small culture. In France itself, that happy land of the Stuart Mill school, the rural population has sunk immensely, and is continuing to sink, in comparison with the growth of the urban population, and this, too, although France has had the advantage of much protective legislation of a special kind for the benefit of the peasant proprietary, protective legislation which is deplorably absent in Ireland. If I may so express myself, the British transformers of agrarian conditions in Ireland have been so whole-heartedly devoted to the great cause of the transfer of property from one class of the

community to another that they have quite overlooked the most essential safeguards against the transferred property being filched from its new holders by means as well known to the student of European history as they are notorious to the rational observer of Irish conditions, both religious and economic.

I would venture accordingly to call the special attention of the saner portion of the Commission, as well as the more numerous public, to a vital difference in the condition of Irish as compared with French peasant proprietors, which absolutely ensures at no distant period the final ruin of the Irish peasantry. I refer to the all-important fact that on a French peasant holding there is never any fear of anything happening in the semi-unconsciousness of the deathbed to sweep the little estate bare of the capital necessary to its successful working, and never any danger to the peasant heirs of being left with little more than the *nuda proprietas* of the farms through every franc in the bank and every head of cattle in byre and stable *being willed away* from the next generation of cultivators of the soil. Nothing more ruinously disheartening, as well as ruinous in operation, can be imagined for the heirs of the peasant holding than to find that, beyond house and land, everything in cash or credit has been swept away by the last will of a dead man who can never repair the destruction he has caused.

I say emphatically that unless there be a vast curtailment of the liberty of testation, a curtailment in favour of the natural heirs of the property, not only agrarian, but commercial, a moral terrorism, aiding a boundless avarice and insatiable cupidity, will continue to chase Irish industry, and the industrious population along with it, from all parts of the country, including the fancy areas of the pseudo-congested districts.

The facts are notorious. They cry to heaven for

vengeance, and as Providence usually acts by human agencies, they cry to public opinion for denunciation and to legislation for reform, though the remedy may be too late. In every part of Ireland, from Donegal to Waterford, the approach of the death of the merchant or farmer brings black fear and discouragement to the heart of every member of the family who in the natural course of events would be expected to carry on his business with the normal capital for commerce and cultivation. It is not my business to enter into the excellence or the worthlessness of the motives which influence the existing debauch of testation in Ireland. The fact remains that anywhere in Ireland a dying man, even when he spares the lands or the dwellings of his heirs, may will away almost every pound and shilling of the movable wealth of the family to destinations which will be forever beyond the reach both of the menaces and supplications of the beggared survivors. I have casually noted down a few cases, occurring within the neighbourhood of the pseudo-congested areas, in which the entire movable wealth of humble and middle-class families has thus been irretrievably swept away by a single deathbed. I have the case of a man dying worth £2,000. He left some five hundred pounds' worth of neglected land and buildings to his heirs, while he had been led to sweep away into other hands more than £1,500. Another man died worth £600, and not a single penny came to his industrious relatives. Another man willed away £4,500, which were put by the stranger legatees into a good business in which, though priests and bishops, they had shares; but not a penny of the 7 per cent. interest came to the dead man's family. I knew another case of an old man, who had been supported by his nephew for years, meeting with an accident which forced him to enter the hospital of a benevolent and conventual association. He died there; and every penny of

£600 which stood to his name was willed away to the proprietors of the hospital. I knew a case of a wealthy woman dying in the care of such a benevolent association and leaving £10,000. Though she left a favourite niece and godchild in struggling circumstances, she had been got to will *only* £50 to her heir and £10,000 to total strangers.

If the Commission realised that in a comparatively short time in Ireland it is calculated that almost all the existing estates will be broken up into properties of small holders peculiarly susceptible to such deathbed influences and catastrophes, they would have no doubt of the enormous gains that are going to be secured by the usual beneficiaries of such testation, and of the heartrending discouragement and ruin which will continue to drive the industrious heirs from a land cursed by the Dead Hand to a degree unknown since the Dark Ages. It is in vain that intelligent legislators may fancy that they have established a protection against alienation of the inanimate body of a farm, namely the soil and building, if at the same time there be no protection against alienation of the vital forces, the working capital of the estate, the whole of whose mobile wealth can be swept off by a single deathbed.

The new peasant proprietary legislation in Ireland offers the most terrible temptation to all the persons who habitually profit by such testamentary alienation, not only to exhaust every means of gainful influence, every kind of mental and moral pressure, amounting to practical hypnotism of the flickering intelligence and the terrified imagination; but to go still further—wide though the ruin be already—and to assail and sap the bonds of general citizenship and patriotism in order to facilitate and extend the spoliation of the domestic affections. *The Class War becomes the natural sequel and supplement of the deathbed extortion,* especially when the class war promises to transfer

the wealthiest property of the community from men who cannot be easily influenced by those sinister advisers into hands that in nine cases in ten will obey in trembling their rapacious suggestions. *Conversely, it is apparent that the protection of heirs from deathbed spoliation would act automatically to remove the worst of the agrarian unrest. It would remove the most alluring hope and the main calculation of profit from the Real Chiefs of the Social War.* When the driving out of the native gentry can no longer be expected to bring a notable portion of their estates into the crucibles and melting-pots of the deathbed dictators, why run the risk of promoting subversive theories and demoralising acts, which are often so dangerous ultimately to the claims of moral and religious dignitaries? To encourage public ruin for no considerations of profit or gain has hitherto been the speciality of the fanatics of idealism alone. It has never been seriously attributed to persons so eminently practical as worshipful divines.

Nor need we confine our consideration to the gain in money and goods which may tempt at present the clerical revolutionist. At no distant period, in a very few years according to the tenacious patience of Churchmen, it is not merely the personal property of testators, but their land itself, which will be open to disposal by the panic of dying saints or sinners. The statutory restrictions on alienation of peasant estates may not outlast a few generations. Circumstances even may occur to shorten the present interval. It is a prize, a solid prize, of lands and hereditaments to the capital value of some hundred and fifty millions sterling, which is now offered by liberty of testation to the clerical agitators who will have succeeded in finally transferring the entire superficies of Ireland from educated landowners to a faithful peasantry. A far inferior spoil would have allured the rapacity of Alaric and Attila.

It should be self-evident that unless you give the heirs of the peasant proprietary of Ireland some of the protection which is secured to the heirs of a French peasant proprietor, there can be no issue but pauperisation and the flight of the population. It is something enormous, the amount of wealth which in ten years alone is subtracted in this manner from Irish industry and conveyed to purposes which, however sanctified, are not industrial. As things are at present, appeal to the courts is simply useless, for no adequate law exists. In nine hundred and ninety-nine cases in a thousand it is sufficient to produce the evidence of the doctor and the attorney as to "the lucid intelligence" of the expiring will-maker, and the doctor and the attorney are practically certain to be aware of the potent presences before whom they must render testimony. It would be instructive, though probably difficult, to inquire into the amount of the public subventions scattered by the Congested Board which have already paid toll to the influences preponderant with dying testators.

As for the pauperised heirs who may cling to the denuded farm, I wonder has it been asked where they are likely to obtain a working capital in face of the strict provisions forbidding the raising of loans on mortgage. Such situations have not been unknown in Europe before. If the heir cannot obtain money on legal mortgage, he may well be led to seek for it on terms of non-legal mortgage, which will be at least as binding on his conscience as if they had been engrossed and endorsed on all the parchments of the Four Courts. In how many cases may the money which was taken from him by the will of a testator be returned to him for use at a just percentage, the lenders being, if not the originals, at least the derivatives, of the venerable legacy hunters? From end to end of the country what a future your Peasant Proprietary Act, destitute of the most essential

peasant proprietary protection, is preparing for Ireland!

If the Commissioners desired to go to the bottom of the pauperisation for which the nostrum of the Board of Doles is pressed upon them, they would learn much by an examination of the cases of contested wills before the law-courts during the last twenty years in which impoverished heirs endeavoured, usually with entire unsuccess, to break the deathbed arrangements which beggared them. These cases are the merest fraction in comparison with the multitude of disputed wills which never come before the courts, and in which the heirs have to accept the terrible law of the Dead Hand; yet they will amply suffice to indicate the appalling drain of the industrial capital of Ireland which occurs at 10,000 deathbeds of rich and poor throughout the country.

When £1,000, £5,000, £10,000, are taken out of industrial employment and out of Ireland, it is a very poor sort of palliation for the Congested Fiction to go about scattering the money of the taxpayers in partial replacement of the purloined savings of the people. And I could remind the Commissioners that even the total of wills is far from representing the disastrous total of these deathbed transfers of property. In order to avoid the publicity of a will, and for other reasons, the transaction often takes the form of a *donatio inter vivos*. The property is passed by the dying man into the hands of the new owner; and neither the family nor the courts are exactly informed of the occurrence. As an illustration, I may mention that there came under my own observation a short time ago a most instructive case of the extraordinary pressure and extraordinary inducements which are employed upon these occasions to obtain *the immediate cession of the property without even the formalities of probate*. A lady was dying who possessed

a couple of thousand pounds ; and a reverend visitor to her deathbed urged upon her the propriety of handing the whole of this money over at once into his hands. She promised to leave it as he directed in her will. But he insisted "that it might greatly lengthen her life if she handed over her wealth at once to such a good object," adding that the Order which he represented would guarantee to pay her a high rate per cent. upon her money during all the years she might live. "She would thus have both the benefit of her good work and the full income upon her property at the same time." Unfortunately for this adviser, the medical man in attendance, an Irishman himself, used all his influence against the realisation of the scheme, and the money was rescued for the family of the deceased.

THE CLERICAL SCHOOLS FRAUD AND THE RUIN OF THE CHILDREN.

THE COMPLICITY OF DUBLIN CASTLE.

THERE can be no doubt that Dublin Castle knows all about the ruinous and dishonest work of the so-called teaching orders in Irish education.

Referring to the intermediate schools, which all, both male and female, are in the hands of Conventual Orders, the Chief Secretary, Mr. Birrell, stated:—

The present scheme as it exists is repulsive. . . . It is a system of cram, cram, cram, divorced from teaching; a system which murders the intelligence of the people. . . . The money now spent on intermediate education should be spent on improving the character of the schools, upon making them really educational and teaching places, and not in turning the little boys and girls of Ireland into money-making machines.

But Bishop O'Dwyer, of Limerick, said the same thing, and made the same charge before the University Commission:—

Nine-tenths of the pupils of the intermediate schools are lost; they are going to swell the ranks of the *declassés*, without an education that is worth a button to them for any useful purpose.

According to the Bishop, as well as the Minister, the teaching orders are heartless frauds, getting public money on false pretences.

The Maynooth bishops are not more honest. They are under Propaganda, and must use Irish money for Propaganda objects. What did they do with the

endowments of Newman's Catholic University? As Mr. P. J. Kenny stated in a public lecture in the rotunda :—

A sum estimated at £250,000 to £300,000 was subscribed by the Catholic laity in very hard times to endow the Catholic University, and the only intelligible account we have ever heard of the money was that the Irish bishops sent it to Rome against the Italian war of unification, and the episcopal defalcation left the institution in Stephen's Green to fall into the hands of the Jesuits.

The Catholic University embezzlement matched the intermediate schools embezzlement. And Dublin Castle, we see, knows it all the time.

* * * * *

The Conventual Orders grabbed the £160,000 a year for the industrial schools, and the Government Inspectors, from Sir Rowland Blennerhasset to Dr. Fagan, tell us the result :—

The children are untaught, ill-fed, and filthy.

We saw a class of forty boys employed in knitting stockings.

Growing boys were almost exclusively fed on bread and cocoa.

The bathing arrangements were very filthy. The boys had a bath only once a month. The masters were equally dirty. One told me that he never had a bath.

That is the system of industrial schools to which Dublin Castle, in conformity with its clerical alliances, pays the public money. Only two or three shillings a week spent on the children, the technical training omitted in order to save the cost, the children brought up as Unemployables, three-fourths of the Public Endowment secured by the Conventual Order; is that honesty, or is it heartless and inhuman fraud.

PAUPERISING DEFECTS OF CHARACTER PRODUCED BY THE DOMINANT SYSTEM.

THERE are defects of character which make individual success impossible ; and the same defects, when multiplied a millionfold among the individuals who compose a nation, must produce general pauperism and degradation, as surely in the case of the multitude as in the case of the separate persons of which the multitude is composed. If the entire population of a country receives an education which is no education ; if the efficiency of the schoolmaster is subordinated to the claim of the ecclesiastic to dominate the temporal as well as the spiritual sphere ; if even the higher schools of a country are run for the profit of Trading Companies of Ecclesiastics instead of for the greatest benefit of the pupils ; if especially the womanhood of a nation is formed in institutions which regard home and family as the least important considerations ; if the example of successful mendicancy is impressed upon the popular mind in every district by ever increasing colonies of non-workers who live in dignity by all the tricks of the begging letter-writer and the lottery promoter ; if every attempt at will-power, self-determination, and self-development is suppressed as treason to the clerical autocrat ; if social promotion, if promotion in the public administration, and even the opportunity of livelihood is denied to the man who rejects that despotism ; if, further, the alliance of the un-Irish Government and the un-Irish Prelacy habitually places political patronage at the service of clerical cupidity ; if even the money of the public taxpayers employed by the so-called Congested Board is used in the interest, and distributed by, the agents of the

Power whose maxim is, "Let there be no liberty and no light"; if, in a word, the Irish people are denied every faculty and every ambition which make nations prosperous and great, then Ireland must be what it is, weak, ignorant, and pauperised. The doles of the Congested Board, expensive and costly though they are in the aggregate, are ridiculous alleviations of such ruin and such a system. Even if always honestly intended, they are hardly even Mrs. Partington's mop against the Atlantic Ocean.

I entirely deny that there is anything in Irish nature or in the Celtic race to explain the wholesale and enduring failure of Ireland. Millions of the descendants of the men and women who landed on the quays of New York from Ireland, and who had been such hopeless, shiftless, unimproving creatures in their native land, are to-day the most thriving, substantial, wealthy, advancing, and independent citizens of the American republic. There are Irish millionaires in scores between Maine and California; there are wealthy Irishmen by tens of thousands. The engineering, commercial, and legal professions have tens of thousands of their successful members whose names and ancestry attest their descent from the Isle of Paupers. The same story comes from the Dominions of Canada and New Zealand and the Commonwealth of Australia.

But it should be obvious to every attentive observer, even to a Royal Commissioner, that there is something quite apart and exceptional in the mental atmosphere as well as in the material conditions to be found everywhere in Ireland along with those cancerous cabins and haughty steeples from Fair Head to Cape Clear. That debasement and debilitation, moral and physical, has its origin in the abominably ignorant, abominably dirty, and abominably managed pseudo-schools, which infect rather than instruct the majority of the population, and which enslave the mind while

they incapacitate the body. If the Commissioners would pass from the dirty hovels and thriftless mendicancy that are the pretext for the Congested Fiction, and make themselves acquainted with hundreds of the servile and insanitary schools described in the Board of Education's reports, even they must recognise the main source of the backwardness and destitution of Ireland. But Dublin Castle will introduce no reform into school management so long as it believes that it can purchase the safe and secret service of Clerical Police at the cheap cost of the efficiency of popular education and the ruined future of the wretched children.

It is very difficult, in a matter of such complexity as the explanation of the state of a whole people, to avoid making what can be called overlapping statements, especially in a brief treatise instead of a library of adequate volumes. There are few departments of the subject which are not touched elsewhere by other considerations, from another point of view, and by the action of another influence or motive. But I think I ought to say two things plainly and directly before proceeding further. In the first place, nothing is clearer to me than that, whatever local benefits have been conferred on favourite sections of the population by the Congested Board, with its local policy and its Party State within the State, the very best of such an institution would be vastly out-passed and infinitely bettered by an appropriate department of some general body representing all Ireland and acting for all Ireland, and which would be above all things a body for the promotion of Lay Interests by Laymen, and by none others whomsoever. In the second place, let me avow my absolute conviction, based on comparison of the conditions of Ireland and many other countries during thirty years, that it is the moral and mental depression and paralysis of the inhabitants, the lack of energy and of the

very desire to be energetic, which have formed the root evil of Irish misery and failure. I feel certain that I do not exaggerate in any appreciable degree when I hold that nine-tenths of the economic evils and miseries which afflict the Irish population would completely disappear, if the Irish population would only work as French, or Belgians, or Germans, or Lombardy peasants work, with energy, with endurance, with thrift, and with skill. There is no fault whatever in the nature of the Irish population themselves. They labour hard and successfully elsewhere, when they have acquired skill and unlearned the lessons of dirt and untidiness which they brought from the Irish school and its abominable management, and when they have cast off, above all, the depressing influences that stifle independence of mind and character in the ordinary Irish peasant. *The whole of the professed aims of the Congested Board would be achieved without mendicancy or undue influence on the day on which the Irish would work as other nations work.* Let but the Irish farmers apply to their undercultivated holdings the tillage which they require, and not a surplus labourer would be left west of the Shannon. Let the hovel-dwellers west of the Shannon employ their abundant spare time in rebuilding their homes on principles of rude comfort and healthiness; let them spend in food the half of what they spend in poisonous whisky and poisonous tea; let them weave their own home-made clothes, like other peasants, in the season of indoor work, instead of importing the filthy rags of English rag fairs. Let them act, in a word, as self-helping, independent-minded men and women. But I am asking the impossible. How can a race which is forbidden to think ever learn to achieve?

I say most absolutely that the prosperity of a settled and historic nation cannot be promoted by the confiscation and expulsion of its employing classes; that a policy of levelling kills enterprise and promotes

exile even among the classes proposed to be benefited; that the preaching of social war stops every kind of national development; that lay interests can only be promoted by lay management; that any class which gains by the distribution of public money ought to be excluded from every control of that distribution; and that the policy of coddling a portion of the country, with no corresponding compensation to the rest of Ireland, is the parent of innumerable evils. I accuse the Congested Districts Fiction of promoting all the evils of which I complain.

Has it occurred to many observers of the Congested Board that the fundamental condition itself which brings the Board into operation puts an actual premium on the maintenance of poverty? The Board cannot come into operation in any district which is above a very low poor law valuation. The instant that the district, though still stricken with depression and decay, rises above this extremely low level, the Board, its officials, its salaries, and its benefits to all concerned in its working, *vanish automatically* out of the region. Farewell the donations, and doles, and rewards, and presentations; the encouragement of merit; the coaxing of stubbornness; the innumerable little blessings alleged to accompany the use of public money. I can almost sympathise with the excellent man who recently declared that "the people were so low and distressed that the Government ought to support them till they could take care of themselves." To spend millions of public money on raising a helpless people just above the lowest level of misery, and then automatically to have them drop back into it again, is, even according to the theory of the Congested Board, a singularly ridiculous method of business. Wiser perhaps to keep the district below the point at which the rain of donations must cease than to cut off that fount of beneficence by an almost imperceptible improvement. *On grounds of humanity*

alone the perpetuation of poverty would seem to be the duty of the Congested Board. It has certainly not acted otherwise as a general rule. Far wiser to ask: What can be more utterly absurd than to spend a couple of millions of public money in land purchases which hardly touch the fringe of distress, though they may serve to stimulate the mendicant impulse* and the cry for expropriation? If those two millions had been expended on the rebuilding and recasting of the horrible schools of Ireland, some beginnings could be laid for a population with higher ideals of comfort and cleanliness. But those two millions have been spent upon land purchases for the temporary benefit of an imperceptible section of a vast mass of equally worthy or unworthy applicants!

* The "mendicant impulse" in contemporary Ireland is in no way limited to the Socialist movement against estate ownership. The property of railway shareholders is wanted in precisely the same fashion, and the wildest utopianism is preached by priests in the one case as in the other. A witness before the Irish Railways Commission at Dublin, January 15, 1908, openly wanted dividends to be treated as drastically as rents:—

Mr. J. P. Rafferty.—"The rents of the Irish landlords had been reduced by law. There was no reason why the dividends of railway shareholders should not be reduced on the same principle."

Rev. Father Dowling, C.M., a paid lecturer under the Agriculture Department—the Conventuals now train their priests for Government situations—wants gratuitous transit on all railways!

Rev. Father Dowling.—"Railways should be free, should be as common as the roads!"

THE SPECIAL DANGER OF CONVENT FACTORIES.

THE primary and fundamental ideas of Catholics on Conventual Institutions refer to quiet abodes of peace and prayer, loving mercy and unselfish kindness. The notion of gain, profit, the exploitation of others, is felt to be the direct opposite and opprobrium of the monastic ideal.

The apparition of the factory convent, of nuns who are set to make helpless lay women and girls work for the profit of the Conventual authorities, awakens profound suspicion which easily becomes loathing and—as history has often shown—open abhorrence.

We know already that it is a supreme object of the Female Conventual Orders, subsidized by the Congested Board, to turn their girl-pupils into workwomen for the convent factories. The infamous complicity of Dublin Castle and the Irish parliamentarians deprives even the poor workers in the convent laundries of the guarantee of public inspection under the Factory Acts. The factory nuns are not too holy to be employers of other people's labour, but they are too holy to submit to the ordinary obligations of employers.

In this connection the standard reference is the condemnation passed by a French Catholic Bishop, ratified by the French Courts of Justice, upon the rapacity and inhumanity of the sweating convents of the Good Shepherd :—

“The nuns of the Good Shepherd have no other end than pecuniary gain. . . . The money which the nuns spend on

buildings is in great part the earnings of these young girls. . . . I have said and I repeat that there is not in the whole country an unbelieving employer who thus exploits his workmen and workwomen and treats them as these nuns treat the young girls whom they pretend to receive from charitable motives. . . . I am inclined to believe that what is happening here is also happening in a great number of the houses belonging to this Order—perhaps in all of them—for if this establishment were an exception, its authorities would immediately set things right. If those authorities resist all entreaties, it must be that they approve of the system.”

Memorandum of Mgr. Turinaz, Bishop of Nancy.

The appalling thing about these abuses was that the authorities at Rome absolved the sweating nuns in spite of the complaint of the Bishop of Nancy, who was supported by twenty other Bishops and Archbishops. *The reason is the terrible one, that the immense gains made by the factory convents out of their workgirls and workwomen contribute largely to the support of the Conventual Superiors.*

“It is almost impossible to prevent the nuns from acting unjustly towards persons in their employ for the sake of sending to the authorities of the Mother House—who demand it—an increasing annual contribution.”

The Bishop of Grenoble.

The Congested Districts Board patronizes and subsidizes convent factories throughout Ireland, which are without public inspection, and which are required by their Mother Houses to send out of Ireland an increasing annual contribution.

HOME AND CONVENT SWEATING.

HOME SWEATING AND TUBERCULOSIS — SERF-LIKE
CONVENT LABOUR — KILLING LAY INDUSTRIES —
LACEMAKING SLAVEDRIVERS — THE “ FREEMAN’S ”
AVOWALS — STARVATION WAGES AND BLINDED
EYES.

AT this point I would introduce in a compulsory parenthesis, for which I cannot well find a better place, some views which were impressed upon me as to the actual injuriousness of what are known as home industries, as well as some related proceedings in respect to promoting emigration and impoverishment in Ireland. In the true sense home industries are admirable, that is when they really represent the work, principally of the women, of the peasant family in providing all kinds of domestic articles—clothing and the like—for the members of the family, especially in the season which is unfitted for outdoor work. As I mentioned in my account of a farm in Connaught, such home industry was once as general as it is now rare. Of quite another kind are the home industries which artificial philanthropy has substituted for the natural proceedings of old days. *Home industries in this sense too often turn the cottages and farmhouses into domestic sweaters' dens*, in which the more dependent members of the family are kept at labour without public supervision during non-factory hours, to supply at a cheap price the markets for such goods which may exist perhaps in some foreign countries hundreds of miles away. The miserable gain of this year-long toil is too often entirely intercepted by the domestic sweater; and *bad health and a fierce desire to escape to*

anywhere from the drudgery are too often generated by the boasted home industry.

It would astonish, I think, some members of the Commission to know how frequently young men and young women, especially the latter, declare "that they are going to America to get reasonable wages for their labour instead of having to slave for father and mother for little but a box on the ear." *

I am assured by capable and careful observers that the vast increase in the ravages of the poisonous tea drug is intimately connected with the promotion of these home industries practised under the conditions which prevail in Irish slums and Irish cabins. The close sedentary employment, the prolonged hours of work—which practically mean anything between dawn and midnight that the domestic sweater chooses to exact—the vitiated air, often unspeakably foul, the inferior and often vile nutrition, usually aggravated by the total absence of rational cookery—all these debilitating influences unfit the home workers for healthy food. Food seems gross and repulsive to their anæmic frames and feeble digestion. Like the sweated tailoress in the London East End, the over-driven home workwoman craves the stimulus of a drug, and she finds that drug in the strong, coarse tannin tea, which is always kept "drawing" on the poor hob. A few bites of bread and the cupfuls of black stewed tea form the typical sustenance in multitudes of seats of such home industry.

Intimately connected also with these home industries

* It is no new discovery that home industries may be the worst slavery. In an English journal for the working classes I have recently seen an extremely strong article on this very question, headed "Little Lace-work Slaves." A short time afterwards a correspondent of the paper, writing from New Zealand to endorse the recommendations of the article against this form of employment, added the information:—"Here in New Zealand home work is absolutely prohibited by law. All work must be executed in the shop or factory and under proper sanitary conditions."

—what a hideous parody of home and industry!—is the terrifying increase of tuberculosis, that special scourge of the Irish race since the opening, curious to remark, of the era of Irish Church disestablishment, land legislation, prairie rent leagues, clerico-socialist congestion boards, and the rest of the blessings of liberal progress in Ireland. In the year 1864 Ireland could still show the lowest death-rate from tuberculosis in the three kingdoms; to-day the Irish mortality from the infection far exceeds the worst returns for Great Britain.

Not distantly related to these unhomelike home industries are a large class of semi-religious and ultra-commercial factories, which have increased in enormous numbers in Ireland in recent years. I refer to the vast class of establishments for carrying on all sorts of industries at cheap labour rates, from dressmaking to shirtmaking and laundry work, in which the employed can never hope to become either free workers or free employers, and on which a number of uneconomic motives—such as almsgiving, self-sacrifice, the service of religious superiors, etc., etc.—largely take the place of the wages fund, the pursuit of advancement and independence, and similar practical inducements, which hold good in the regular manufacturing establishments of lay business and progress. As I am only studying the economic aspect of these questions, I have nothing to do with appraising the motives of a spiritual kind or the benefits of a spiritual kind which may attend the vast number of establishments in question. But I would have pointed out to the Commission—a very good reason for my exclusion—while giving every credit to the motives of self-sacrifice, mortification of the flesh, voluntary poverty, and so forth, that when attempted to be applied to civil society and to the lives and prospects of lay people, both men and women, *it is the universal experience of civilised nations*

that lay prosperity is absolutely incompatible with the predominance, half spiritual, wholly mercantile, of such institutions, especially when established on any considerable scale at the expense of lay communities.

In the Austrian empire no new institution of the kind is allowed to be introduced into any district until the fullest guarantees have been given to the Imperial Government that no lay interest or industry will be injuriously affected by its establishment. We have no such protection for the struggling laity of the poorer classes in Ireland, and there is too much reason to believe that the authorities of the Congested Board—who are largely ecclesiastical in reality and sometimes in name—give an unfortunate preference to this class of semi-religious and more than semi-commercial undertaking.

* * * * *

Let me illustrate by a single example the injurious working of the systems to which I refer. In an Irish town in which I lived for many years there was a firm of lay dressmakers and underwear makers, especially for ladies and children. A couple of highly respected and very efficient lay women owned the establishment, and were assisted by a number of girl apprentices, a score at least. A local establishment of the conventual character I describe, which had never competed with the industrious laity before, imported from Dublin a recent convert to their community, who had been a very skilful dressmaker in a Dublin house. With the aid of this recruit, a dressmaking and shirtmaking industry was set up within the religious establishment. A large number of schoolgirls attending the schools of the institution, and which received public money for their education, were at once employed in the assistant department of the new factory or workshop, receiving little or no wages for their work, which was held by

their employers to be only a useful training for their future occupations. The clergymen of the denomination to which the new workshop belonged at once began to use their influence to obtain customers for the pious undertaking. Within three years the firm of lay dressmakers, deserted by most of their former patronesses through no fault of their own, were reduced to dire poverty, while the whole of their girl apprentices had been thrown into the street, a few being so fortunate or unhappy as to escape to America.

This sort of thing has taken place, and is taking place, all over Ireland. It took place to such an enormous extent throughout France, displacing the employment of vast numbers of humble trades and callings, that it explains a great portion of the popular wrath against such institutions, as well as the indifference to religion which has followed. If the Commissioners had seen, as I have seen, a poor French *blanchisseuse* clenching her fist and screaming execrations as the conventual laundry cart of one of those flourishing institutions dashed by, it would need few words to prove that *interference with the livelihoods of the poor is a reckless game for a religious society*. The Irish are still a patient people, but Frenchmen could not speak more bitterly than many Irish men and women of what is going on in a hundred localities to-day.

When the Congested Board promotes with complacency the work of institutions in which no lay man or lay woman can ever be more than a most inferior subordinate, it is perhaps unaware that both industry and religion can be injured by its attitude.

* * * * *

In this connexion, it is essential to know what statistics can be obtained as to the eyesight of poor lay girls in lacemaking establishments, and

how many of them become unfitted for this employment, and return to their homes in injured health and vision, and without any of that domestic training which would fit them to find helpmates in their class. The delicate fabrics wrought by a half-blinded girl may command admiration and profit for devout employers at needlework shows in Kensington and Belgravia ; but a young wife with a good knowledge of house-keeping would be more useful to an Irish farmer and more useful to the Irish land, besides being a happiness to herself, instead of being the pauper cripple of a great sweating establishment.

* * * * *

When we remember the number of commercial convents in Ireland which draw a portion of their income from the making and the sale of lace—the making by poor girls and the sale for the benefit of the convent—the evils of the system must be indeed intolerable to force the *Freeman's Journal* to publish its leading article of the end of August last. Dealing first with the question, Does lacemaking pay? the *Freeman* has to place on record that, after a long and weary apprenticeship of years, *the poor Irish lacemaker barely gets a shilling a day from the convent!*

So much is said and written upon Irish lace that people, seeing the artist, are apt to forget the practical side of the industry. Does lacemaking pay? It must be remembered that the lacemakers are skilled workers. It takes from two to five years to learn the art of lacemaking. The higher classes of lace require not merely uncommon manual skill, but a keen artistic sense. The earnings of the lace-worker average a shilling a day, that is for a full day's work ; many workers give only part of the day to lacemaking, and in a good many places there is very often not enough of work to give full employment. Of course, when work is plentiful, a particularly expert worker could earn more, and the week's total sometimes amounts to 7s. 6d., and in some cases to 10s., and an earning of 2s. a day has been reached.

The *Freeman* goes on to point out that the mechanical toil of the Nottingham looms is paid

infinitely higher than the artistic drudgery of the poor employees of Irish convents.

The Nottingham lace operative is a mechanic. His work possesses no individuality. He learns nothing of design, no delicate handiwork, none of the variety of stitches or their arrangement for effects of light. His is a mere textile trade. His earnings are not 1s. per day, but 1s. 2d. per hour. The women who are engaged in this mechanical work receive 10d. to 1s. per hour.

For the sake of placating its priestly masters, I suppose, the *Freeman* proceeds to state that, after all, the Irish convents pay their drudges a little better than the Belgian nunneries. In fact, while the Irish girl may get a shilling a day, her fellow-slave in Belgium receives only a franc!

The Belgian lace-workers do not earn as much as the Irish lace-workers. The report of the Minister of the Interior gives an average of only 80 centimes per day, and the average earning of four hundred of the best workers near Brussels averages just one franc per day, equivalent to 9½d. English money. The average of the hundred highest is 1.25 francs per day; only one worker earned 3 francs per day.

What a grim irony there is in that attempt of the *Freeman* to shield its convent patrons by that reference to the "better position financially" of the Irish convent drudge! Still there is some bravery in the further declaration of the Irish clerical organ that the evils of convent lacemaking are not confined to wasted years and miserable pay. The lacemaker, who does not want to be dismissed from her employment, dare not roughen her hands with any kind of domestic utility. She must remain useless for every faculty of womanhood except drudging for the convent. *The convent lacemaker is the most helpless of emigrants, and loss of sight is a constant danger.*

In estimating the practical results of lacemaking, other considerations should be taken into account. *The lace-workers, at least the good lace-workers, do not engage in house-work.* The rough work of

the house or the farm spoils the hand for the exceedingly fine needlework required in lacemaking. Even the ordinary needlework of the home is shunned by many lacemakers for that reason. Not only are the ordinary household duties neglected, but, incredible as it may seem, it is not infrequent to find an expert lacemaker who does not know how to darn a stocking or to sew a rent in her dress. Lacemaking does not stop emigration. One of the difficulties of the schools and classes is that after they have trained a girl to do good work she goes off to America. It does not appear that these girls turn their talent as lacemakers to account in foreign lands, and *they are more helpless than the other girls for the emigrant's life. Physical infirmities, such as dimness of vision, follow from sedentary life and the close application required in lace-making.*

Of course, "lacemaking does not stop emigration." As a rule every one of those poor girls—stooping over that ceaseless needlework in all those lace-making convents which dare to brag of their "encouragement of Irish industry"—is supported by the dream of a day when years of saving or the gift of a relative may enable her to seek and find a more human life thousands of miles from pious Ireland. Unhappily, in numberless cases the poor tired eyes have given way long before the advent of the means of escape.

But what unconscionable cruelty is exercised by those holy women and their holy directors while all those poor Irish girls, shut in from nature and life, are first forced to misemploy years of their childhood in the convent "schools," learning a trade which ensures their mental and physical ruin, and are afterwards sweated and starved, in the season of their early womanhood, under all the circumstances of privation and unhealthiness discreetly indicated by the *Freeman's Journal*! Some might ask, did the members and nominees of the political priesthood on the Royal Congestion Commission direct the special investigation of the Commissioners to the lacemaking dens of Irish clericalism? I am quite sure that nothing of the kind was attempted. The phrase "the Good Nuns" or "the Devoted Ladies," is

enough to hypnotise an arranged commissioner to any required degree of moral coma.*

* It is always difficult to trace any effective supervision of convent sweating in the reports of Government inspectors. I note, however, Mr. Redmond and his merry men recently secured the consent of the British Government to a renewed exemption of convent laundries—one of the most exhausting forms of employment—from all real control or examination.

What does not diminish the suspicions attached to the exemption from public inspection so persistently required by convent laundries in Ireland is the fact, not at all as well-known as it ought to be, that the Government Inspectors of *related classes of semi-penal institutions* in England and Scotland are very far from expressing confidence or admiration with regard to the prevalent system. In most of these establishments, the labouring inmates are young women, often extremely young, belonging to the class of ruined girls, who are in need of so much sympathy and care, and who get very little of either. The supervising persons, who keep the workwomen to their task-work in vogue, are, or profess to be, influenced by moral and religious considerations above all. In the case of the Catholic convent laundries, the supervisors and directresses are, of course, nuns of various Orders, often the Good Shepherd so deplorably notorious in France, who, in virtue of their vows and training, have ideas on the subject of sexual frailty of the most ascetic character. It is at least arguable that girls, who have fallen far from ascetic ideals, would often receive more sympathetic treatment from less exquisite perfection. At any rate, even in the ordinary class of female refuges and orphanages, the reports of the lady inspectors are disquieting. They comment upon "the peculiar danger in these places through their isolation from the growth of knowledge and experience outside." One lady inspector states that "in only one home" was she allowed to enter and inspect immediately upon announcing herself, the inference being that she was kept out until certain matters had been arranged for inspection.

All the reports speak of "the extreme youth of many of the inmates" as well as of the depressing monotony of laundry work, even though "the spells of work are broken with prayers." In one Scotch institution for the Reformation of Penitent Females—why should females have to endure penal penitence more than males?—there were 100 women, who worked from six in the morning till six in the evening, and who made every year £3,700 for the laundry authorities! Each girl made, on an average, £37 a year, and had for her reward a penance cell, in which she was locked at night, and the recreation of "prayers"! The revelations as to the Good Shepherd Convents in

France were even worse, far worse, than these reports ; and the criminal consent of his Majesty's Government to the non-inspection of convent laundries in Ireland leaves us no information whatever.

I am convinced that it is specially dangerous to humane principles to leave the semi-penal treatment of unfortunate girls to members of their own sex who regard such misfortune as pollution beyond repair.

THE BOARD AND LABOUR SWEATING.

LACE-MAKING GIRL SLAVES.

THE subsidies of the Board represent a weekly wage of less than four shillings to the work girls. Thus :—

“ In fifty-three classes established by the Board for the production of lace and embroidery, the total earnings paid to workers amounted to £21,580 during the year. . . . The number of workers among whom this £21,580 was distributed would be about 2,000.”

Evidence of Mr. W. J. D. Walker, Industrial Inspector to Congested Board.

Dividing £21,580 among 2,000 workers, we get about £10 annual salary, and £10 divided between fifty-two weeks gives *less than four shillings weekly wages among the lace-makers of the Board!*

“ At the Congested Districts lace class in Glencolumbkille, five shillings to seven shillings a week would be the most that is earned by the girls. . . . In the embroidery the wages are very small.”

Evidence of Very Rev. Canon Saecny, P.P.

“ In the Donegal carpet factories started by the Board the average earnings of the girls employed do not pass 5s. or 6s. a week. They started with 3s. 6d. a week.”

Evidence of Very Rev. Monsignor Walker, P.P.

“ In Connemara I see that the Board has had to discharge girls, there being no steady demand.”

Statement by Lord Dudley, Chairman of Commission.

GIRL-DRIVING IN THE BOARD INDUSTRIES.

The worst forms of home-slavery flourish under the Board. The complaints of the girl-slaves who fly to America is fully borne out by the admissions of the

Board Inspector as to how the girl lace-makers are driven to work; and the medical evidence elsewhere is overwhelming. The Commission was led carefully to avoid examining work girls and medical men.

“If a number of trained workers can earn 8s. or 9s. a week, then the uncles and aunts who criticize the thing, say, “If Mary Ann so-and-so can earn so much, then why cannot some other girl earn it?” *Then the parents get at the girl* and say, “How is it you do not earn that amount?”

Evidence of Board Inspector Walker as above.

BOARD INDUSTRIES TUBERCULOSIS.

“Here in a melancholy troop come *the delicate anæmic girls who work for the ‘sprig work’ Cottage Industry*, and never stir out of the house the whole day until their health breaks down, and they fade away in consumption.”

Report on Poor Law Medical System in Ireland in British Medical Journal, March 26, 1904.

“The splendid newly-built Catholic Church rises amidst the most wretched cabins. The well-built convent stands on the sloping hillside, and now and then the Catholic Bishop’s palace. The village streets, foul and dirty, seem never to be cleansed. . . . The doctor enters the poor cabin, where in the corner sits the daughter whom he so often visits, but his medicines are powerless against surroundings so ruinous to health.”

British Medical Journal as above.

SPECIMEN “HOME INDUSTRY” IN IRELAND.

The Report on Factories Inspection continues to show *no inspection whatever of home workers* in the principal seats of the Congested Board’s “Home Industries!” The worst horrors of sweated child labour that occur among those sottish lazzaroni are entirely protected from official notice. Even when inspection takes place elsewhere in Ireland the reports are often painful. Thus, Dr. Agnew, in the Urban District of Lurgan, reports that “children *between three and twelve years of age* are kept until late bedtime, wearing out their eyes at a stage of handkerchief making, at three farthings per dozen handkerchiefs.”

Factories Inspection Report, 1906.

PART V.
THE KEY OF THE IRISH
REVOLUTION.

THE POLITICAL SACRISTY AND THE
RIBBON LODGE.

THE SINISTER ORDER.

“The sinister part played by the Ancient Order of Hibernians overshadows all other questions in importance. Mr. Devlin is the head of this secret organisation. . . . There is no check upon its operations ; no light is let in upon its proceedings ; its affairs are conducted in privacy and darkness.”

Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., 22nd June, 1907.

CLERICAL ENDORSEMENT OF THE SINISTER ORDER.

“That we tender a hundred thousand welcomes to Brother Devlin on the occasion of his first visit to Donegal as National President of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, and assure him of our loyal support and co-operation.”

Resolution of bishop, priests, and laity of Donegal at great Ribbon demonstration, Letterkenny, 22nd August, 1907 ; the bishop being the Bishop of the Congested Districts Board.

THE ORDER IN IRELAND INVOKES THE ORDER IN
AMERICA.

“Is it not time to call on the millions of our Brethren of the Ancient Order in some favoured land to aid and assist us in our fight by whatever means they think fit ?”

Speech of Mr. James Boyle, ex-M.P. for Donegal, at great Ribbon demonstration at Letterkenny, as above.

AGRARIAN AGITATION AND CLERICAL LANDGRABBING.

“Now the cattle-raiders are bringing down the value of the mortgaged properties, and *the mansions are turning into monasteries for a song*, while everybody knows that the priests and bishops could stop the cattle-raiding in twenty-four hours. The nearer the mortgage is to the total value of the estate, the sooner will the raiding exhaust the margin and make way for one more nunnery. The amount of *property in lands and houses which has gone into ecclesiastical hands on very easy terms through the organised violence of the last thirty years*, throws an instructive light on the history of that period: but the Orange landlord goes on beating his big drum for the Government that has delivered him to the priest.”

The author of “Economics for Irishmen.”

DUBLIN SLUMS—REAL CONGESTION.

While the political clergy invent congestion, which does not exist, as a pretext for confiscating landed estates, they leave without notice a horrible congestion which does exist; in the crowded rookeries of Dublin, for instance, unfit for human habitation.

According to the returns of the Registrar General at the Census of 1900, out of 292,000 persons, the total population of Dublin, 72,000 occupied one room, and not even one room apiece. *It was 22,000 families which were so housed; and the number of families of more than four persons inhabiting a single room exceeded 4,000.*

It is matter of just complaint that the Dublin Corporation, when clearing absolutely dangerous slum areas, make no adequate provision for rehousing, though lavishly compensating the slum landlords—often represented on the Corporation—for interfering with their property; but the political priesthood is dumb.

THE KEY OF THE IRISH REVOLUTION— THE POLITICAL SACRISTY AND THE RIBBON LODGE.

THE PRICE OF THE PRIEST—PRIESTS OF THE FIRST
LAND LEAGUE—THE CONGESTED BOARD CLERGY
ON THE RIBBON LODGE PLATFORM—WHY IRELAND
IS A FOREIGN MISSION.

THE belief of all Catholics who are Catholics that the priests of their Church throughout the world are in the immense majority earnest and devoted servants of the Divine Master is entirely held by the present writer. Nor do I make an exception as regards, I am persuaded, the great majority of the Irish Catholic clergy. But often in the history of the Church a less evangelical section of ecclesiastics have imposed their policy of temporal ambition on the peaceful majority of devout and humble ministers of the Gospel; and nine-tenths of the troubles in which the Church and society have been engaged have had precisely this origin. St. Francis of Assisi and St. Francis of Sales have been temporarily effaced in the public mind by clerics of a different type, hard keen brains, and hard grasping hands; and the consequences were bad for temporal and spiritual interests. Even in the Society of St. Ignatius the sweet presence of Edmund Campions and Frederick von Spees has never failed in the worst days of the directors of kings and the traffickers in provinces.

There are always historical antecedents for historical events and occurrences. Ireland exhibits no exception to a rule of experience and reason. To go no farther back than the end of the eighteenth century, when

Pitt and Castlereagh, actuated by motives of what appeared to them stringent expediency, took steps to hire the support of the Irish Catholic bishops and priests for the destruction of the Irish Parliament, they did far more than obtain an indispensable body of mercenary auxiliaries. They founded the modern tradition of the connexion between State and Church in Ireland. And when the State gets connected with the Church for its own purposes, the Churchmen always understand by the combination a means for extending their power and consolidating their influence. "We help you to keep down the Irish; pay us our price." And the British Government has gone on paying the price of the priests. The school was made a sacristy outhouse, the schoolmaster a priest's lackey, the schoolchild an ignorant wastrel, all to pay the price of the priest. The democratic Queen's University was first starved and then decapitated. The representation of the people, imperial and local, was left or made for the priest's convenience and domination. And the priest, of course, gave no thanks, but built higher and broader the edifice of his temporal ascendancy.

The British Government surrendered lay Catholic interests to pay the price of the priest. It rejoiced to see those fine shillelagh-waving Father O'Flynn's who cozened the crowds of voters with tremendous outpourings of nationality warranted harmless. It never condescended to reflect that all the sacerdotal loyalism operated to dig deeper and wider the division between the Catholic tenantry and the Protestant gentry; and that the rebel party, the Davises and Gavan Duffys and Smith O'Briens, were infinitely more solicitous about the Union of Irishmen than sleek, constitutional, oath-of-allegiance Maynooth. Perhaps the Union of Irishmen was distasteful to the British Government. In that case the game of the priests was doubly facilitated. They could make Government legislation their

tool for uprooting the independent and educated class from that ownership of the land which mainly stood between the priest and universal monopoly. It was all for the tenantry that the priests vowed they were working with a sublime altruism; and the more the priests succeeded, the more the tenantry emigrated. The priest in the Ribbon lodge and the priest's man in Dublin Castle—was not that a dainty dish to set before the King?

Here we have the Key to the Irish Revolution, which is meant to be incurable by all remedies, because the priest wants no remedy; he wants Ireland a State of the Churchmen. Here are the origin and justification of the unsleeping confederation or conspiracy—a virtuous and laudable conspiracy if you will—which, perfectly unaffected by “reforms of land tenure,” aims at the total removal of the propertied classes still existing, and especially the class of Protestant gentry. And the immediate object of the whole enterprise—an enterprise which did not commence either to-day or yesterday—is to transfer the ownership of the land of Ireland into the hands and into the disposal of the members, allies, and subjects of an occult power in the popular Church. That is the present move in the game. And in this conspiracy, virtuous and laudable if you will, the Congested Districts Board has been a chief instrument from very shortly after the inception of the Board, or at least from very shortly after Mr. John Morley placed the practical control of the Board in the hands of the Ribbon Society and the latest incarnation of the Land League. Thenceforth the vast powers of the Board—really irresistible in the eyes of a multitude of ignorant and mendicant creatures within its special domain—were always found, no matter with what benevolence they were apparently exerted, to be followed and accompanied by a steady growth of general failure and by a steady increase of agrarian Jacobinism directed against whatever

remained of the influence and property of the Irish gentry. I am not discussing the question whether or not it is right to desire the extermination of the gentry. I only note that the more the Congested Board professed to work for the amelioration of distress and the promotion of concord, the more the discontent continued to extend, and the more invincible became the forces of discord. The Priest wants the Land : therefore the Priest destroys the Landlord.

* * * * *

I confess that so far back as the year 1883 I had begun to suspect that the strange persistence with which the revolutionary passion in Ireland continued to survive conciliatory legislation of every kind must be due to an agency that wanted not conciliation, but embitterment, an agency that was accustomed and able to direct and inflame the popular masses ; and this vast and effective agency could hardly exist outside the popular Church of the country. During the Land League campaigns I had seen much which had gradually, though insensibly, prepared my mind for this conclusion ; but in the autumn of 1883 there occurred an incident which came to me as a revelation.

I was at breakfast one morning in the breakfast-room of the Imperial Hotel in Sackville Street. The long table at which I sat was fairly crowded, by some dozen of Catholic clergymen among others. They talked with much evidence of intimate knowledge of a number of events in the land war ; but suddenly all were silent while a Catholic curate narrated a story of personal experience and action, which was indeed illuminating. He related with airs of triumph how he had personally arranged the boycotting and intimidation of a man of considerable property in his parish, who was also engaged in business in an English town. The priest was the chief of the local

branch of the Land League, and their object was to force their chosen victim to surrender some valuable lands. With this object a boycott had been declared against him and his servants; and as this proved insufficient against his considerable wealth and perseverance, they determined upon intimidation into the bargain. The curate went on to describe the intimidatory letters, the menaces, the skulls and cross-bones which had adorned those epistles. He continued to describe the digging of a grave on the boycotted land, with the funeral inscription of the gentleman in question fixed into the open grave. The listening circle of clergymen accompanied the narrative with laughter and applause. But the crowning moment of the curate's story came when he related how he had secured the services of the local reporter of the Associated Press, and had sent through him a vivid account of the dangers which threatened the life of Mr. So-and-so. The object of that recourse to the reporter was to secure the dissemination of the ugly news in England, and especially in the town in which the victim had commercial connections of importance, and where his credit must be affected by such menaces to his life. Bubbling over with glee at the recollection, the curate cried out in termination: "That just finished him. The Englishmen all sympathised with him, but not one would trust a man who might be shot any day of the month. Within a week he came running to the local branch, promising to give up his lands if they would only make it known in the public press that there was complete peace between him and the Land League." The uproarious laughter of the clerical listeners attested their hearty admiration of their reverend colleague's stroke of statecraft.

As for myself, I felt I had enjoyed a vision into the mentality and morality of a portion of the popular

Church, which helped at any rate to explain a good many things difficult to understand.

Only the other day I was conversing with a Catholic clergyman who is a dignitary of the Church. Our conversation turned on the state of Ireland, and I spoke strongly on the injury done by the persistent agitation and the venomous war of classes which was so strangely protracted, and which had stained so many of the loveliest scenes in Ireland with the memory of murder and outrage. The distinguished clergyman turned on me, and said with surprise more than anger, "And if there were people killed, were they not landlords or agents? and not one man on earth ought to be grieved at misfortune to either." Here, after a quarter of a century, and after innumerable specimens of the same spirit in the interval, I was to find the same clerical disregard of the precepts of Christianity which had shocked me in that Dublin inn room in 1883.

Looking at the power of the Irish Catholic clergy over the ignorant masses of their countrymen, looking at the iron tenacity with which clergymen were found to cherish the same savage sentiment against owners of property, the explanation was at least partially clear why every effort at conciliation and every measure of reform have totally failed to allay or to weaken the rancorous spirit of revolutionary agitation. Where are the clerical influences on the side of peace and fraternity? If they have occasionally spoken, it was usually in inaudible whispers. What has been said in tones that could be heard have usually been messages of war and hatred; and those hateful and formidable incitements have never been more loud or potent than in the clerical annexes and agencies of the Congested Districts Board. In the preserves of the Congested Board have been held the largest demonstrations of the Ribbon order and the Ribbon lodges. There the Ribbon members of Parliament,

the National President of the Ancient Order himself, have been welcomed, applauded, and covered with the benedictions of Board bishop and Board clergymen. The platform of the Ribbon meeting has included by the dozen the most influential deans, canons, and monsignori, who dispense the doles and subsidies, paid by the taxpayer, but distributed by the avowed missionaries of the redistribution of property in Ireland.

I confess I attach the slightest possible value to the belated denunciations of some of the worst excesses of the agrarian anarchists, such as the brutalities of the Ginnell crew of cattle-beaters and cattle-burglars. At the same time I give full adherence to the good faith of the semi-Conservative Archbishop of Tuam, for instance, who has condemned so vigorously the perpetration of cruelties which were "an offence against God Almighty and an embarrassment to the good intentions of Mr. Birrell." Archbishop Healy and many like him, besides being humane and kind-hearted men, do not want anything to happen, even perhaps for the real benefit of the never-satisfied tenantry, which is calculated to diminish the chances of a good hearing in England for Mr. Birrell's expected surrender on the university question. Most notorious advocates of the social war recognise the utility of occasional prudence and strategic retreat. But all that does not touch the persistent maintenance of an atmosphere of hate and animosity, a perpetual threat of something worse in store, calculated to keep all owners of property on the tenterhooks of indefinite alarm, until, weary and despairing, they are driven into the pens of the Estates Commissioners who are ready to lighten them of half their incomes in the interests of peace and confiscation. Judicious intervals of comparative repose may enable the victims

to meditate without interruption on the necessities of their fate.

It is time to go to the very root of the disastrous business which the congested districts fiction is used to cover; and in these concluding pages it will be done. What has taken place in Ireland is this: The influence of the Government and the money of the taxpayers have been applied to carrying out the policy of that perverted section of the Catholic Church in Ireland which is the patron and the paymaster of the Ribbon lodges or Ancient Order of Hibernians—an excommunicated body—and to promoting the destruction of the existing order of property and even the very constitution of civil society, the object of these destructions being the substitution of the Rule and Supremacy of the Political Priest, with all the baneful consequences of extortion, monopoly, the plunder of the laity, the enrichment of the clerical class, moral and physical terrorism, and arbitrary power.

I make no charge against the religious priesthood of Ireland, be their numbers hundreds or thousands. But the religious priesthood has been a diminishing factor in the policy of the Irish clergy ever since the papal diplomacy or statecraft inflicted upon their Church the most offensive and insulting depreciation which could be offered to a national Church, namely the abolition of its canonical liberties and its subjection, like a mere settlement of negroes or coolies, to the Foreign Missions department at Rome. Domineering masters though they are to their lay countrymen, even the political priests possess no such sacerdotal rights as the clergy in the canonical Churches of Catholic Christendom. They are governed by the *motu proprio* of a Vatican committee. Laws and canons of the ancient Irish Church stand abolished, except so far as they may be incidentally applied at the discretion of the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda;

and their application to-day has no binding force for to-morrow.

In the language of such an authorised work as the Right Rev. Monsignor Goddard's "Manual of Ecclesiastical Law in Practice in Missionary countries," not even bishops in such semi-civilised districts have their ordinary powers; and priests have none at all which are protected by any established right whatever. "*Ireland is a missionary country. . . . The appointments of bishops are still called elections. But there is no such thing in a missionary country as a real election of a bishop, and consequently the method of election as laid down in canon law may be regarded as obsolete. . . . In missionary countries neither clergy nor laity have any means of enforcing any natural rights except by appeal to the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda.*" The religious priests in Ireland can thus have no power to interfere against the intrigues, the usurpations, the domination, of the political priesthood, who are the agents in missionary countries of an occult power at the Vatican that is above the canon law. This iron system, which leaves the tonsured man in Ireland no more rights than a spiritual puppet, was introduced by a political power which is not Irish. It has its legitimate application in countries which are really missionary, in lands of unchristened savages and persecuting heathen, where the Church militant must live, as it were, under perpetual martial law. The fiction, the offensive fiction, by which Ireland—which was converted to Christianity fifteen centuries ago, which was a famous national Church twelve centuries ago—is degraded to the level of such regions, was a sordid political manœuvre from the outset. It continues to be a political manœuvre and a national curse to-day.

We need not be surprised, accordingly, if the political organisation which has been thrust upon the ancient Church of Patrick and Columba works for

power, and temporal aggrandisement, and greed, and monopoly, and uncharitableness, and temporal domination over Catholics and non-Catholics. Whatever reform, whatever instalment of rights, whatever promise of prosperity and enlightenment, comes to Ireland under such a system, is at once confiscated by the political Churchmen for the objects of their insatiable ambition, an ambition which is at the same time an absolute and unresisting servitude to the men who make, and who can unmake them, without check, right, or privilege beyond the *motu proprio* of a camarilla of foreign clerics on the Tiber, bent on administering Ireland as they administer Mongolia and Zanzibar.

As a Catholic I can recognise the expediency of having such prompt and irresistible machinery, even though capable of unnecessary martinetism and injustice in its proper sphere of Religious Jurisdiction, which is the barbarous and heathen regions where the jurisdiction of the Propaganda applies. But the interference of the Churchman in civil life and administration becomes singularly incongruous and intolerable when, in addition to the ordinary incompatibilities of the Spiritual and Temporal domains, we have a sort of Spiritual coercion, in comparison with which the usual restraints of the sacerdotal vocation are unfettered liberty and joyous emancipation. To see Propaganda Clerics, who have not even a canonical right which they can call their own, yet pretending to exercise the privileges of lay citizens, and to parody the motions of free judgments, must be a constant subject of painful meditation and a constant provocation to just suspicions. From the Cardinal Archbishop to the mendicant friar, whatever their qualifications for religious virtue, they do not possess one qualification for free citizenship. Mr. Birrell runs to consult the Maynooth Episcopate! He might as well have imported a phonographic

record from the secretariate of the College of Propaganda.

The political Churchmen merely receive their orders; sometimes they share the spoil. Rulers, but real serfs, they are the trained janissaries of ecclesiastical pachas and viziers, who can, so to speak, reward them with a red hat or a bowstring. They are an anomaly in the religious, as well as the political, sphere, for the priest's kingdom ought never to be the kingdom of this world. The general reader, from whom such fundamental truths of the Irish situation are carefully veiled, may now commence to understand why the political sacristy can be the directory of the Ribbon lodges, and why Maynooth marches against Irish Property as it marched against the Irish Parliament. There is only to add that for a dozen years the public fund entrusted to the partisan hands of the congested districts junta has supplied the clerical conspirators with the means of fortifying their ascendancy over the half of Ireland through the immense prestige of dispensing the doles and subsidies of the State; and has enabled them at once to reward their lodgemen and cattle-raiders, and to levy huge contributions for their undertakings as a just commission on the public benefactions which they distribute among their henchmen. The Congested Districts Fund is a milch cow with a hundred teats, at each of which is sucking an organisation of clerico-Ribbon lazzaroni.*

* The "congested districts" are organised under "parish committees," which is another word for the local priest and a group of his nominees and dependants, all payable for their services out of the public subsidies received from the Board. These clerical Tammany rings form the "evidence" most in request before the Royal Commission, and the one burden of their whine is "More public money for the parish committee." The able author of "Economics for Irishmen," himself a witness insulted and denounced by clerical members of the Commission, as we have seen, thus describes the working of these gangs of public thieves: "'More money!' was the cry of every priest, . . . and always for the 'parish committee

scheme,' under which the priest selects the recipients, *who return a large proportion of the money to him in increased contributions to the collections.* Those get it who give most to the priest, so that the parish committee scheme is in part an arrangement by which *the priest pockets the taxpayer's money through the Congested Districts Board.* . . . I have known priests' favourites who have got grants five times, while the really poor cannot get a penny." In extenuation of the rapacity of these unworthy priests it must not be forgotten that they are themselves spiritual helots without defence against the demands of occult superiors.

An Irish representative sent to the *Times* the following example of interference by one of the revolutionary priests in private situations and employments. A man is ordered to give up his livelihood "after last mass."

"Dear Sir,—At a meeting of the — Branch of the United Irish League, Rev. Father — (president) presiding. I was instructed unanimously to request you to attend our meeting on Sunday next, the 5th inst., after last mass, in the League room, —, *to resign your position as bailiff* on the — estate.

"Signed —, Hon. Sec."

The fixing of the meeting of the League tribunal "after last mass" is another instance of the use of the occasions of worship for the clerico-Jacobin intimidation. This "Rev. Father President" of the Intimidation Club is also naturally the Chairman of the Parish Committee which distributes the public money of the Board among the rabble of the Ribbon lodges.

GOVERNMENT PLACES FOR THE CLERICO-JACOBIN PRESS.

THE "FREEMAN'S JOURNAL" THE LADDER TO
OFFICE.

I AM indebted to the rivalry between Irish parties for the following pithy exposition of the salaried favours conferred by Dublin Castle upon the editorial staff of the leading organ of Ribbon rent and priestly rule, the notorious *Freeman's Journal*. Denounced by that converted revolutionist, Mr. W. O'Brien, M.P., for the insatiable ferocity of its attacks upon the Irish landlords, and universally recognised for the total absence of fair play from its columns, the *Freeman*, through its clerical patrons and shareholders, usually commands the prompt attention of his Majesty's administration in Ireland. I take from the indignant pages of the *Sinn Féin*, an organ of another section, the enumeration of some of the golden showers which have descended from the Chief Secretary's office into the bosom of the editorial Danaë of the crozier and the league. The organ of the other section publishes the narrative in support of its contention that "five leaderwriters of the *Freeman's Journal* are now in receipt of salaries from the Government:—

"The following is the list of the chief appointments from the *Freeman* staff made within the last few years by the British Government:—

"Richard Adams, leaderwriter, *Freeman's Journal*, appointed County Court Judge of Limerick at £1,400 per annum.

"P. J. Kelly, chief leaderwriter of the Belfast *Morning News* (*Freeman's Journal*, Belfast Edition), appointed Removable Magistrate at £800 per annum.

“John George MacSweeney, Editor of the *Weekly Freeman*, appointed Local Government Board Inspector at £800 per annum.

“Maurice Cosgrove, chief leaderwriter *Evening Telegraph*, appointed Temporary Local Government Board Inspector at three guineas per day and travelling and maintenance expenses.

“Matthias MacDonnell Bodkin, chief leaderwriter of the *Freeman's Journal*, appointed County Court Judge of Clare at £1,400 per annum.”—*Sinn Féin*, 16th October, 1907.

It is interesting to note that Mr. MacDonnell Bodkin, chief leaderwriter of the *Freeman*, was only sworn in as County Court Judge in the beginning of October last, being a speaking proof of the admiration of his Majesty's advisers for the Ribbon campaign of the clerico-Jacobin journal against the remaining rights of owners of property in Ireland. It should not be forgotten, perhaps, that Mr. T. M. Healy, M.P., as already mentioned, has given the name of the Bishop of the Board as former Chairman of the Shareholders' Committee of this same *Freeman*. So endearing are the ties which unite the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Congested Board, the Chief Secretary's office, and the functions of *Freeman* justice in the County Clare!

With regard to the *Freeman* and the Congested Board, one historical sequence of events was this: (1) Bishop O'Donnell helped to clear the opponents of Mr. John Dillon from the *Freeman*; (2) Mr. John Dillon got Chief Secretary John Morley to place Bishop O'Donnell and Father O'Hara on the Congested Board which they have dominated since 1895; (3) the Congested Board expended some £500,000 of public money on Mr. John Dillon's pauper constituency in East Mayo; (4) Mr. John Dillon is the clerical standard-bearer for Sectarian Education and Redistribution of Property. Good business!

THE LODGE, THE BISHOP, THE BOARD, AND THE COMMISSION.

EXCOMMUNICATED IN SCOTLAND—BLESSED IN IRELAND
—MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN AGAINST RIBBONISM—THE
BISHOP OF THE BOARD WELCOMES THE RIBBON
PRESIDENT.

It remains to be seen how the Ribbon lodges or Ancient Hibernians do the work of the Reverend Revolution & Co.

It is unnecessary to retrace the past history of the Ribbon order, or combination of peasants and others, who—usually for agrarian and religious reasons or pretexts—filled the rural districts of Ireland with criminal violence on a colossal scale. From the Whiteboys to the Moonlighters, their essential character did not change. Mr. Alexander M. Sullivan, M.P. for Louth, in his work “New Ireland”—one of the most respected Nationalists and Catholics of his generation—describes the Ribbon society, or Ancient Order of Hibernians, in terms of scathing indignation: “*Vain is all pretence that the Ribbon society did not become, whatever the original design or intentions of its members may have been, a hideous organisation of outrage and murder.*” We should assume that it has reformed some of its methods to-day in view of its intimate identification with the political priesthood in Ireland. It remains, at all events, an oath-bound secret organisation, from which non-Catholics are rigorously excluded; and it avows that, like the political priesthood, it pursues the objects of the Parliamentary League, including the destruction of the landowning gentry. In Ireland, as

will be seen later, it is patronised by the most influential of the political bishops and clergy; and the three allies, the Political Clergy, the New Land League, and the Ribbon Order, form an inseparable and indiscernible combination for common objects and a common intolerance.

What is remarkable in the highest degree is the fact that, while the Ribbon order basks in the benedictions of Irish Churchmen, from archbishops to curates, in Scotland—only a dozen miles apart—the same order is under the heaviest curse of the Church. I am informed that the reason of this astounding difference in the ecclesiastical treatment of one and the same organisation is simply due to the fact that the Catholic bishops in Scotland have no use for an ultra-revolutionary society which welcomes Mr. O'Donovan Rossa and demands the extirpation of landlords. The Catholic bishops in Scotland prefer to stand well with the gentry, whom they certainly cannot hope to treat as the Irish gentry have been treated. Still it is scarcely complimentary to Bishop O'Donnell, of the Congested Districts Board and Commission, to have his devoted and enthusiastic Ribbonmen simply declared to be excommunicated persons in Glasgow, while they are applauded and blessed by prelates and priests in Letterkenny and Raphoe.

The grim fact is, however, undeniable. I take the following extract from the Parliamentary League's well-known organ, the *Freeman's Journal*, of the 24th August last, which gives voice to the surprise of the redoubtable order at this differential treatment:—

THE HIERARCHY AND THE ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS.

CATHOLICS REFUSED THE SACRAMENTS.

(From our own Correspondent.)

Glasgow, Wednesday.

The strained feeling brought about by the recent action of the Scotch hierarchy towards the Ancient Order of Hibernians

Society continues to grow stronger. That a loud outcry has not been made speaks volumes for the endurance and strength of faith of the Irishmen of Scotland. *Irish priests in Scotland—of whom there is a large number—feel keenly in the matter.* They come here to minister in the Scotch Mission because sufficient Scotch priests cannot be found to attend to the spiritual wants of the largely increasing Irish Catholic population, to whom is entirely due the spread of Catholicity in Scotland. *And now they have to refuse the sacraments to a large body of men in every parish, men who were in very many cases the props and hard workers of the Church.* Little wonder is it that the banning of a society purely Catholic and Irish has provoked angry and wounded feelings all over the country, as branches or divisions are in existence in almost every town and village.

It must certainly be said that it all looks uncommonly fishy. For the Ancient Order of Hibernians to become so thoroughly damnable as soon as they cross the strip of water between Ireland and Scotland, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the worthy Ribbonmen cannot really be very much better than they should be even on the Hibernian side of the Mull of Galloway. At all events there is *somewhere* something to bear in mind for the further consideration of the relations between the Ribbonmen, the Parliamentary League, and those political bishops and priests who are the connecting link, as well as the supreme authority, of the oath-bound secret society, the cattle-driving parliamentarian, and the royal eleemosynary board for distributing millions of the public moneys to the "parish committees" of half the kingdom.

The Ribbon organisation in Ireland is exceedingly strong to-day. I am informed that its growth coincides with the immense increase of funds in the hands of the priests in consequence of their privileged position as distributors of the public money at the disposal of the Congested Districts Board. *Through the parish committees the priests can conduct the stream of benefactions exactly in the directions which approve themselves to the conscience and judgment of the distributing*

authorities. Whole counties in the north and west of Ireland are now in the hands of the Ribbon lodges, just as the Ribbon lodges are in the hands of the political priest. As a necessary result, the clerical grip on the parliamentary representatives has become absolutely irremovable and irresistible. In the councils of the United Irish parliamentary party there is now an inner circle; and that circle is formed by the union of the Ribbon and Clerical elements, the power of the lodges supplementing the power of the croziers.

Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., just a year ago, first had the courage to proclaim that the majority of the Irish party were under the despotism of secret conspirators, of an unknown secret ring, "a secret Ribbon lodge that dictates their policy and their fate." On the 22nd June of the present year in his own journal, *The Irish People*, Mr. William O'Brien repeated his denunciation of the Parliamentary Ribbon lodge, which he definitely named as the Ancient Order of Hibernians. Mr. Joseph Devlin, M.P., a man of much energy and ability, who rose to his present position from a situation in a Belfast public-house, is the National President of the Irish Ribbonmen; and Mr. O'Brien does not hesitate to describe without any disguise the part which Mr. Joseph Devlin plays in the domination of the parliamentary party.

It is quite in keeping with the traditions of the Hibernian order for it to choose its chief behind the bar of a publican. I should say that a large majority of the Ribbon leaders of the present day are publicans and spirit grocers. I lately spoke to one man who is vice-president of a very large Ribbon organisation; and the fellow boasted that he owned two public-houses in a large town, from which he derived a net profit of fifty pounds a week. What I said some pages back as to the closeness of

the connection between the Drink Interest and the Political Priesthood will not be contradicted by the warm relations between the priests and the Ribbon publicans. We shall shortly see the splendour of the reception accorded to the National President of the Irish Ribbonmen by the prelates and priests of the Congested Districts Board; but for the moment I will allow Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., to continue his denunciation of the dominant part played by the Ribbon lodge in the councils of the parliamentary party of Mr. Redmond and Bishop O'Donnell. Mr. O'Brien does not scruple to apply the epithet "sinister" to the organisation which is excluded from Church membership in Scotland, and which is the bodyguard of the same Church in Ireland:—

But the sinister part played by the Ancient Order of Hibernians overshadows all other questions in importance. Mr. Devlin is the head of this secret organisation, and it is evident that he is determined to stuff and swamp and rig conventions, to stifle the voice of the people, and to force his confederates down their throats. The dangerous power which has thus been placed in his hands, and the unscrupulous manner in which he is prepared to exercise it, must now be apparent to everyone. Whether there is an express obligation or not, the members of this organisation are expected to give preference to a brother, and as the organisation has recently been imported into the county and city of Limerick and other places, Mr. Devlin has good reasons for looking upon himself as the Grand High Elector of Ireland. There is no check upon its operations; no light is let in upon its proceedings; its affairs are conducted in privacy and in darkness. Mr. Devlin has only to pull the strings, and his will must be obeyed. Honest, well-meaning Nationalists, who would cut off their right hands rather than do an unworthy act, and who joined the order in the belief that they would advance a sacred cause, have simply constituted themselves Mr. Devlin's tools and instruments, have surrendered their judgment into his hands, and have no option but to do as they are bidden. Our public life was never confronted with a graver danger than the existence of such a state of things.

The Ribbonman President to whom Mr. William O'Brien attributes such a dominant position in the Irish parliamentary party—which really looks as if it should be called the Ribbon parliamentary party—took a characteristic part in the organisation of the disastrous strikes at Belfast, which created such a saturnalia of terrorism, culminating in bloodshed, in the industrial capital of the north. I have before me a report of Mr. Devlin's activity, contained in the Irish correspondence of the *Tablet* of the 17th August last. A few extracts will suffice to indicate the part played by the Ribbon President.

A striking incident of the Belfast troubles was a speech made by Mr. Devlin, M.P., at a meeting of the strike committee in Custom House Square on Saturday evening. Mr. Devlin said: . . . "I am here first of all to ask, Why has the city been overawed by the presence in its midst of a vast army, hosted in all the streets and lanes of Belfast? I ask, Who brought them here? . . . Again I ask, Who or what is this mysterious authority that has insulted the law-abiding people of Belfast?" . . . On Monday evening the rioting culminated in the fiercest outbreak that has been known in Belfast for many years.

I do not for a moment question the sincerity of Mr. Devlin's convictions. I am sure that he is a true Ribbonman to the core, and that his actions and speeches are the genuine outcome of his Ribbonman training. But if we are to understand the revolutionary situation created by the Congested Districts Board and its supporters, it is necessary to realise the position of this Ribbon President, dominating the parliamentary party—of which the Congested Board Bishop is the treasurer—and identifying himself with the strike committee in one of the most lawless outbursts of socialist violence that have ever occurred in Belfast. I suppose in a sense that the Ribbon President is the superior, at least on Ribbon platforms, of the Ribbon Bishop. But he was also the colleague of Mr. Victor Grayson, M.P., in the Belfast strike.

What a flood of light it throws upon the objects and policy of the managers of the Congested Districts Conspiracy to find that the incendiary politician who, from the eminence of the Strike Committee, denounced the most just and moderate employment of military protection to defend peaceful life and property at Belfast, was straightway welcomed to the episcopal embraces of the leading member of the Congested Board! No doubt that Bishop O'Donnell acts according to his sense of the moral obligations inculcated upon him by his most venerated Superiors. No doubt Bishop O'Donnell believes, with all the perfervid enthusiasm of the clerical fanatic, that the changes which he and his are contemplating in the social constitution of the country, will result, as the Jesuits say, *ad majorem Dei gloriam*. His belief, his enthusiasm, his fanaticism, while they may remove him from the tribunal of the moralist, only increase the solicitude of the Statesman. The Ribbon Organisation is the negation of Civilised Society. It is the pretorian guard of the Congested Districts Board, of which the Arranged Commission is the echo and the tool.

* * * * *

In Donegal, the premier congested county, the priests of the Board and the officials of the lodges prepared a vast demonstration to show the force of the Ribbon organisation and the intimate union between the lay and clerical wings of the movement. The new congestion cathedral was the headquarters; and at a Letterkenny meeting Mr. Devlin and the Ancient Hibernian Order were received with the greatest enthusiasm. Priest and layman combined to publish their praise. The priest in the chair declared that "this magnificent demonstration was thoroughly representative of every parish and every townland in Donegal." Another priest moved the resolution

“tendering a hundred thousand welcomes to Brother Joseph Devlin on the occasion of his first visit in the capacity of National President of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, thanking him also for the honour he has conferred upon the Hibernians of Donegal to-day, and assuring him of support and loyal co-operation in the discharge of the onerous duties of his office.” The National President himself is said in the *Freeman's Journal* to have “received a tremendous ovation, the multitude cheering again and again. The National President, overcome with great emotions, declared he was proud to see such a *splendid meeting of the people of old Tyrconnell in the cathedral town of the illustrious Bishop* whose name and services would ever be remembered by a grateful nation (cheers).” And he had the satisfaction to know that the illustrious Bishop, the noble Bishop of a former incident, was waiting in person, amid his canons and monsignors, to proclaim the indissoluble patriotism of the lodges, the League, and the party!

In the consecrated phrase of Irish stump oratory, the Ribbon day of Letterkenny was “a great day for Ireland.” It will deserve some study in detail. Other Ribbon meetings simultaneously indicated the range of the campaign.* Fresh from his work in Belfast, the National President of the Ribbonmen—head of the Ribbon Board of Erin, chief organiser of the parliamentary party, etc., etc.—is thus seen to have received a royal reception in Donegal from the affiliates of the diocese of Raphoe, assembled under

* Thus at the same date and hour, only a few miles distant, another Ribbon demonstration was being held in the county Tyrone, with a magistrate in the chair, and sixty lodges represented in the gathering. I cite the opening of the *Freeman* report:—“A monster demonstration was held in Cookstown yesterday, over 6,000 people being in attendance, and upwards of sixty divisions of the Ancient Order of Hibernians represented. After parading the town, a meeting was held, Brother Conway, J.P., county delegate, being moved to the chair.”

the leadership of the Bishop and priests of the Congested Districts Board outside the cathedral of Letterkenny itself, that edifice which has been called "The New Congested Cathedral" from its being built in all its expensive proportions in the episcopal townlet of Letterkenny, while the Congested Districts Board was distributing scores of thousands of pounds of public money among the grateful diocesans of the Bishop. I have briefly quoted already from the proceedings—as I find them published in the *Freeman's Journal* of the 22nd August last—a couple of instances, merely to illustrate the closeness of the ties which unite the Bishop of the Congested Board to his faithful Ribbonmen. I now quote enough to permit the reader to appreciate and judge clearly and distinctly the significant character of this clerico-Ribbon demonstration. I give the first extract with the triumphant headlines as they appeared in the *Freeman's Journal*. It will be seen how joyously the editor records the fact that "the policy of the Irish party was approved" by the ultra-Clerical association which is excommunicated in Scotland. If Mr. William O'Brien be correct in his description of the dictatorship of the Ribbon President over the Irish party, the Ribbon organisation can most appropriately approve of the policy of a party which is little else than its mouthpiece in Parliament and its comrade on the platform, in the boycott and the cattle drive.

ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS.

IMPOSING DEMONSTRATION IN LETTERKENNY.

POLICY OF IRISH PARTY APPROVED.

Thursday, the 22nd August. one of the most significant and impressive Nationalist demonstrations that have ever been held, even in old Tyrconnell, took place in Letterkenny. The occasion was one of remarkable and exceptional interest: remarkable because, in numbers, it far and away transcended nearly every previous assemblage; and exceptional because *the*

demonstration of the unity and determination of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, in support of the Irish party, gave to it a special significance.

Amongst the districts represented were—Ballyshannon, Carn-donagh, Moville, Fahan, Inch, Glenties, Castlefinn, Burtonport, Rossgull, Bunrana, Bundoran, Killybegs, Donegal, Glenswilly, etc. The Feis took place in the Bishop's Field, where a platform was erected, and *his Lordship, who was received with extraordinary enthusiasm, welcomed the people, and expressed his deep interest in the Gaelic movement.*

Amongst the clergymen present were—*Right Rev. Dr. M'Glynn, Sranorlar*; the Very Rev. Dean M'Nulty, Patter-son, New Jersey; the Rev. Peter Byrne, Australia; Very Rev. Dean M'Ginley, D.D., *Maynooth College*; Very Rev. Dr. John M'Ginley, Philadelphia; Rev. Dr. Ml. O'Donnell, D.D.; Rev. Ml. Hyland, C.S.Sp., *Blackrock College*; Very Rev. Dr. Maguire, President *St. Eunan's College*; Very Rev. Ml. P. Ward, Vice-President; Rev. P. D. M'Caul, Rev. Fr. M'Devitt, P.P., Raphoe; Rev. Patrick M'Cafferty, Adm., Inver.; Rev. James C. Cannon, C.C., Letterkenny; Rev. Thomas Slevin, St. Johnston; Rev. Dr. Sweeny, Adm., Letterkenny; Rev. Patrick M'Cafferty, Adm., Inver; Rev. Arthur Friel, C.C., Glencolumbkille; Rev. C. M'Menamin, C.C., Taraney, Fanad; Rev. Joseph Sheridan, C.C., Falcarragh; Rev. Father Gillespie, C.C., Convoy; Rev. John Boyle, St. Columbus, Derry; Rev. Daniel M'Ginley, C.C., Castlemore; Rev. Bernard Cunningham, C.C., Toland; Rev. J. G. Brannan, C.C., Churchill; Rev. John Kennedy, Adm., Glenswilly; Rev. — Sharron, C.C., Ballyshannon; Rev. — M'Ginley, C.C., Ballyshannon; Rev. Ml. O'Sullivan, Mount-charles; Rev. Patrick Kelly, Westminster; Rev. A. Logue, Milford; Rev. Patrick Kelly, London; *Very Rev. Monsignor Walker, P.P., V.F.*, Burtonport; Very Rev. James Scanlan, P.P., Upper Rosses, Dunlo.

At the great meeting which was held close to the noble cathedral and to the college in the Bishop's Field, on the proposition of Mr. Michael Dunnion, County President of Ancient Order of Hibernians, seconded by Mr. John Sweeny, of Burtonport, *the chair was taken amidst loud cheers by the Rev. James C. Cannon, C.C., Letterkenny.*

Freeman's Journal, 23rd August, 1907.

Here we have indeed an imposing array of prelates of Donegal, and professors from Maynooth, and parish priests and curates in scores, all assembled to do honour in Ireland to the organisation which the Catholic bishops of Scotland excommunicate for its

evil life and policy.* If the *Freeman's Journal* had cared to publish the professions of the leaders and sub-presidents and other officials who conducted the lodges of the diocese of Raphoe to the demonstration, I have no doubt that we should have had the names of four-fifths of the licensed vendors of gin and whisky within the extensive scope of Bishop O'Donnell's pastoral charge. I must be content, however, with the names of the clergy, as the reporters failed on this occasion to confer immortality upon the ranks of the publican interest. There is one utterance at the demonstration to which I would ask some attention. It is the oration of Mr. Boyle, who appears to have been the leading layman present from Donegal, as beseeemed his dignity as the former representative in Parliament of a Donegal constituency. As such, he must have received the hearty support of Bishop O'Donnell, of Raphoe and the Congested Board, and his opinion cannot be considered to be under any sort of episcopal ban or excommunication.

In Mr. Boyle's speech I ask the reader to note three things. In the first place, the speaker congratulates his audience on the "great growth" of Ribbonism during recent years in the premier country of the Congested Districts Board. This entirely corresponds with what the author of "Economics for Irishmen" has testified as to the distribution of the public money by the Board among the favourites of clergymen, who, as we see from the foregoing enumeration, are supporters of the Ribbon organisation from one

* I have italicised in the list of Ribbon dignitaries given by the *Freeman* the names of a couple of the clerical witnesses who were welcomed to the Congested Commission, while independent testimony was evaded or browbeaten, and also the names of three of the leading clerical seminaries of the Irish Catholic Church. The education of the clergy and the exhortation to "any means they think fit" against property and liberty assuredly form a combination which might occupy such a pen as wrote the "Lettres Provinciales."

end of Donegal to the other. In the second place, we have an emphatic invitation from this ex-member of Parliament, urging the Ribbon order in America "to aid and assist them in their fight by whatever means and methods they might think fit." (Great cheers.) I pass no hypercritical judgment upon the "means and methods" which Bishop O'Donnell's former representative welcomes so warmly. But it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that Raphoe Ribbonism and political impartiality have nothing in common, *and that the means and methods of the Ribbon order in America are scarcely a guarantee of just dealing by the Congested Board towards the landed gentry of Ireland.*

Finally, the ex-member of Parliament bore his emphatic testimony to the "*perfect unity*" which joins the Ribbon lodges with the *United Irish League*, a testimony which certainly goes a long way to corroborate Mr. William O'Brien's description of the part played by the Ribbon order in the councils, and I presume in the agrarian policy, of the parliamentary party. With these preliminary observations, we may allow Mr. Boyle, according to the *Freeman's Journal* report, to mount the platform:—

Mr. James Boyle, ex-member of Parliament, solicitor, Ballybofey, who was cordially received, said after the magnificent addresses they had just listened to there would, he must confess, be little for him to say. He could not, however, forego giving expression to his congratulations on the splendid turn-out of the Ancient Order of Hibernians of county Donegal there that day, on the sterling Catholic and Nationalist spirit manifested by them throughout the proceedings, and on *the great growth and spread of the organisation in the county even during the past year* (cheers). . . . He would put it to them, should a voice not go forth from that meeting to their brethren in other lands and other climes that, since England would not listen to the voice of reason and justice, since she sweated them of their livelihood, and drew from the exile still the bitter tear, since she would not take her robber hand from their throats, and offered them a stone when they asked for bread, since she would never yield to argument, but only to force, *was it not time that they should call*

on the millions of their brethren of the Ancient Order in some favoured land to aid and assist them in their fight by whatever means and methods they might think fit to secure equality in the cradle of their race, and for the national independence of their country, and perfect freedom to work out what they still believed to be Ireland's high destiny amongst the nations of the world? (Cheers.) An unfriendly writer had called the Ancient Order of Hibernians the unknown power behind the United Irish League. It would be their duty to make themselves, in the words of their general secretary, *the unknown power, not behind, but with, the United Irish League*, and their object, each pulling one oar, *acting under their motto of perfect unity*, be thus the aim, after centuries of fight, in their time and in their day to bring the barque of Erin safely and victoriously at last into the port of national independence.

* * * * *

We have now accompanied the National President of the Ribbon organisation from the semi-socialist platform of the strike committee of the Belfast riots to the most episcopal platform of the Ribbon prelates, priests, and congestors of Raphoe. We have marked the enthusiasm of his welcome, and the sentiments of his supporters. We have seen how all those most reverend and reverend dignitaries are contributing to the "great growth" of the anti-landlord and anti-Protestant society which has had such a terrible record in the past, which was solemnly excommunicated by the Supreme Pontiff as late as the year 1882—an excommunication which has never been withdrawn, and which has just been promulgated and enforced anew by the Catholic bishops of Scotland. We see the secret lodge, with its oaths and passwords and surreptitious musters and gatherings, at one end of the scale, and the Ribbon clergy of the congested parish committees and the Ribbon members of the Congested Board at the other. We have heard elsewhere from the skilled author of "Economics for Irishmen" that the working of that Board is a vast network of public waste and clerical extortion. We have heard Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., describing

the preponderance of the whole Ribbon conspiracy in the direction of Irish policy as "the gravest danger of the day" in Ireland. We know that the flight and emigration from Ireland are proceeding with redoubled force under the operations of the same Board, which is surrounded by failure and ruin on every side. We have seen that a Royal Commission, ostensibly issued to inquire into the operations of the Board, has been deliberately rendered untrustworthy and useless by being packed with leading representatives of the subject of inquiry. And we can leave the matter where it stands for the present.

A useful conclusion to this chapter can be supplied by the following extracts of Ribbon intelligence :—

MR. REDMOND AND THE RIBBON ORDER.

"Behind the men who are conducting the Constitutional movement on the floor of the House of Commons there is a great unknown power."

Mr. John Redmond, M.P., Oct. 9, 1900.

THE RIBBON CHAPLAIN ON MR. REDMOND.

"At the back of Mr. Parnell's Party the Hibernian Order stood, and just so at the back of the Party led by Mr. John Redmond did they stand to day."

Rev. Father McKinley, National Chaplain, Ribbon Order, March 4, 1906.

It cannot be denied that the Ribbon Order is perfectly straightforward and consistent with its traditions. But what of those members of Dublin Castle Boards and Commissions, Parish Committee priests financed with Dublin Castle Subsidies ?

Notes and Illustrations.]

APOSTLES OF ANARCHY.

THE CONGESTED PRIESTS IN THE LEAGUE DIRECTORY.

THE United Irish League, which disunites Ireland, is a Ribbon League. Its objects are Clericalism and Confiscation. On the 15th January it constituted its "National Directory" for the year 1908, and the record of its proceedings is conclusive.

The attendance consisted of the Parliamentary representatives of the political sacristies and the Congested Board. I can ignore the rank-and-file of the puppets elected by the sacerdotal conventions or the cowed parishioners marched to the polls by their political priests.

The dominant feature was the presence of the leading priests of the Congested Board and its parish committees, *headed by the Bishop of the Beard's own Vicar General*, Right Rev. Monsignor McGlynn. A letter of sympathy and adhesion came from the Rev. Father Cannon, *the Chairman of the Bishop's Ribbon Demonstration at the Letterkenny Congested Cathedral*, to welcome the Ribbon President, Mr. Devlin, M.P., as related in a preceding chapter.

PRIESTS OF THE BOARD AND DIRECTORY.

Right Rev. Monsignor McGlynn, Vicar General, Donegal.

Very Rev. Canon McFadden, Donegal.

Very Rev. Dr. Maguire, D.D., Donegal.

Very Rev. Canon Quinn, Vicar Forane, Armagh.

Rev. Father McDonnell, East Mayo.

Rev. Father Lowry, Down.

Rev. Father McCartan, Antrim.

Rev. Father Eagleton, Galway.

Rev. Father Flynn, Leitrim.

Rev. Father Power, Limerick.

Rev. Father Kennedy, Cork.

Rev. Father Brennan, Kilkenny.

Many of these potentates of agitation will be recognised as witnesses at the Arranged Commission.

MORLEY-DAVITT MAGISTRATES.

Six Morley-Davitt magistrates, nominated by the clergy, attended to attest the devotion of their class to League justice and equity.

CLERICAL NOMINATIONS.

A priest, Father McCartan, appropriately proposed Mr. John Redmond as President. League President John Redmond appropriately proposed Ribbon President Devlin as General Secretary, or supreme organiser; and the priests

unanimously elected the exalted candidates. The Bishop of the Board's own Vicar General, Monsignor McGlynn, was unanimously co-opted a national director, along with John Dillon, Stephen Gwynn and other amateurs of the hazel. The Bishop of the Board's own Canon McFadden proposed the auditor of the League, who was unanimously elected.

CLERICAL RESOLUTIONS.

Priests proposed and unanimously supported resolutions "endorsing the action" of President Redmond and the Bishop of Board, "pledging support of the organisation to the movement for breaking up the cattle ranches," and "demanding compulsory powers of expropriation for Congested Board and Estates Commission."

THE PRIESTS AND MAGISTRATES UNANIMOUSLY PREVENTED CENSURE ON CATTLE DRIVING.

But what need of more? *The Congested Board Priesthood are the direction as well as the treasury of the Irish Revolution*, and they can spend millions sterling of public money in demoralisation and discontent. According to a witness from Leitrim, Rev. Father Meehan, the Board gave £7,800 for distribution in the parishes of East Mayo by the priests who elect Mr. John Dillon to represent them in Parliament and at Dublin Castle!

PART VI.

CONCLUSIONS.



A PRETENCE OF INQUIRY AND PRETEXT FOR CONFISCATION.

THE LEAGUE WANTS FREE LAND.

It is essential to remember that Mr. FitzGibbon, the representative of the Central Council of the League, demands from the British Treasury the entire cost of placing what he calls "The people" in full proprietorship of the land:—

"This is the task which the Commission should have before it of recommending that *the British Treasury supply as many millions as will be necessary* to bring the people back to the land. . . . I do not consider that the tenant farmers of Ireland are under any obligation to contribute to pensioning off the old English garrison."

NOT LAND FOR TILLAGE BUT FOR SLOTH.

Not only to have land for nothing, but enough of it to be able to live with a minimum of labour, that is the programme. The Irish correspondence of the *Standard*, in which I recognise the hand and ability of an Irish writer of exceptional clearness of vision, contains, for example, the following evidence of the objects of the agrarian revolution in the notorious neighbourhood of Athenry:—

"The soil is ideal for husbandry, and absurdly cheap; but it is grass to the horizon, and even the

peasant is a grazier. Hence the greed for area. The essential demand is not for land to work and live on, but, rather for enough land to avoid work, on terms to make industry unnecessary. *Thus, the anti-grazing movement is, in reality, an anti-work movement—a movement for a diffusion of landlordism, in which the labourer is worse than before, under a stupider master, less capable in capital and in knowledge to make employment pay. The old landlord employed somebody, as a necessity of his position; the new one employs nobody, as a necessity of his unfitness. The land becomes less productive, which makes the country poorer, with the League and the Land Acts co-operating to perfect the decay.*”

WHY THE BOARD LAZZARONI PROMOTE EMIGRATION.

Sentimentalists will be shocked to know that emigration is often promoted by lazy parents, who want to live on American remittances instead of the tillage of the soil.

Mr. J. G. Quilty, delegate of the League Executive in North Sligo, blurted out this fact about the Sligo parent as emigration agent:—

MR. QUILTY—The principal industry of the tenants is producing milk for the local creamery. . . . The tenants of the Logan estate have already sent twenty-eight children abroad, principally to the United States. . . . They will assist by sending over a portion of their earnings. *The more children in America the better.* . . . There is practically no land in tillage, and that is why the young people are flying to America. . . . *The people here won't till unless you compel them.*”

TYPES OF THE ARRANGED COMMISSION.

STILL THE DARK AGES—CLERICAL MENTALITY—LORD DUDLEY AS JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU—AN ELECTIONEERING COMMISSIONER—CONGESTED M.P.-MAKING—THE BOARD'S LAZZARONI.

To conclude with a brief summary of the whole policy of the Political Church towards landed estate in Ireland, it cannot be better expressed, by way of introduction, than in that war-cry of the Bishop of the Board to the United League, "Join us in overthrowing the ascendancy of the classes." This is the first stage or foundation. The clerical Jacobinism prepares the clerical Absolutism. It is not meant that temporal power and property shall be abolished, but that they shall change hands. In the dark ages of Europe the process was familiar. The Churchmen roused the populace to expel the wicked count or baron, and behold! the count-bishop or the baron-bishop took his place, with all the ancient rights of high and low justice, gibbet and whipping-post, taxes on merchandise, taxes on marriages, taxes on tillage, taxes on cattle, taxes on milling, and malting, and dyeing. The emancipated proletariat who had shaken off Cæsar and Cæsar's deputies got this change in their condition: if they did not now obey and pay, they were not only chastised in this world, but they were excommunicated unto all damnation in the next. In the meantime, and until this revolution had been accomplished, the holy men on-the-make were eloquent on the right of humanity and poverty and the wrong of property and authority. It was entirely in the interest of the toiling masses that they were so

keen to sit in the seats of the mighty ! In this way new facts have very old faces. It is still the Dark Ages in Ireland.

When ages are dark, it must not be supposed that the darkness is confined to the laymen. The mentality of the ecclesiastics, in spite of their greater shrewdness and rapacity even, is often not a whit brighter or better than that of the submissive hinds and boors whom they lead and utilise. It is this consideration that tempers continually, and ought to temper, the sense of indignation at the misconduct of the clerics in Ireland. Those dictators of the ignorant and the helpless are themselves often as confused in their notions, as blind in their deductions, as headlong in their prejudices, as if they had never exchanged the parochial school for the diocesan seminary. They sometimes seem to have learned some theology without learning anything else. One is amazed or angry at their nation-killing action ; and yet one cannot but feel that those bishops and priests are furiously, incoherently, savagely, in earnest, and that the condemnation of their system ought not always to include themselves. Take that worthy Father O'Hara, P.P., who was manufactured into special representative of agriculture on the Congested Districts Board, because, as Sir Antony MacDonnell sagely remarked, a priest sees a great deal of many things. He is prejudiced ; he is ignorant ; he wants the priests on top ; he rushes at a landlord like a bull at a red rag ! but he is so delightfully earnest and serious about it all, that one recognises at once the type of mind that is too free from the laws of thought to be gravely censurable. At the same time, he can be as shrewd in certain things as any village spokesman can be shrewd ; and he is armed with all the power and prestige of the supreme Church in a community which hardly understands any other supremacy. He cares nothing for inconsequences. He is frantic against landlords

“who never come near their tenants.” He tries to be pathetic over the Dillon tenants “who never saw the face of Lord Dillon.” But when you think he really means it, and that he hates absenteeism, and would welcome a resident landlord, he undeceives you with passion. “I don’t mind absenteeism. The local men are just as bad.” He refuses to admit that they even give employment. He is almost ready to maintain that landlords, resident or absent, are so full of the peculiar devilishness of ownership, that they prefer to wait on themselves and to cultivate their demesnes with their own hands rather than circulate a sixpence for local labour. When the good Lord created the universe, He made men, devils, and landlords, the latter the worst of all. This is the special representative of Board agriculture! On the other hand, his cue is to back the tenant. He is asked what he thinks is the fair price for land, and he promptly replies, “The price which the tenant can afford to give.” No A B C could be simpler. The fact that a skilful and industrious tenant can afford to pay with abundant profit a rent which the slothful, mendicant, whining product of the Board’s philanthropy and coaxing would declare impossible, never seems to influence this agricultural representative’s estimate of what a landlord ought to get for his land. Yet, the moment after, he will admit that there are numbers of those Board tenants who “cannot even grow potatoes,” who “have to be raised to the level” at which they can understand the use of fruit trees, and who habitually cut down any timber which happens to exist upon a holding they get from the Board. At the same time he is so bound to these worthless louts that he will not even fetter their freedom of destruction by a tree-protecting clause in their leases or contracts of purchase. As long as Father O’Hara, P.P., is sound on the anti-landlord platform, he was, is, and must always be the right man in the right place as

the Board's own special representative of agriculture for the congested blunderland. To be able to hate the absentee landlord for being an absentee, and to hate the resident landlord because residence is "as bad" as absenteeism, is, indeed, to display that very acumen of intelligent impartiality which justifies the intelligent choice of Dublin Castle. The saints and sages of Pseudo-Congestia are cast in the mould of the patriot orator who in the same breath lamented "our Irish Parliament, that made Ireland great and prosperous," and denounced "the landlord caste that was always the curse of the country," having omitted to know that the Irish Parliament was precisely a parliament of Irish landlords.

It is the same vein of grotesque unreasonableness which pervades most of the panaceas of the most prominent of the Board's members and admirers.

Nor can it be alleged that the Commission, the Arranged Commission, save a couple of its members, was one whit unworthy of the brightest jewels of the Board. The reader has already had numerous opportunities for forming a judgment upon the patron of Ribbonism and the patron of boycotting; it matters little whether they be clerical or lay. Such laymen always do the work of the cleric. But I cannot avoid adding a few words upon a couple of other gentlemen who have been as artistically selected to sound the view-halloo for hunting down the intended victims.

LORD JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU.

There is the benevolent and sympathetic Chairman of the Commission, the ex-Lord-Lieutenant, who was always so carefully surrounded by the most affectionate attentions of the Clerical Rings of Dublin Castle, who had his statistics so thoughtfully prepared for him, whose conversion to what the priests call "Home Rule" was believed to be an accomplished fact *in*

petto. The extent to which Lord Dudley, in spite of his natural shrewdness, profited by this training was everywhere manifest in the proceedings of the Commission. Lord Dudley generally knew where to stop undesirable inquiry. Sometimes he rose to heights which Father O'Hara or Mr. Conor O'Kelly would not disdain. I do not think it would be easy to surpass the specimen of Lord Dudley's bias, already cited by me from report in the *Freeman's Journal* of the sittings of the Commission in Connemara. A Galway landowner, a lady, appeared before the Commission, in order to protest against the cooked statistics which the officials of the League-ridden Boards and Unions make ready for such occasions. Lord Dudley, as Chairman, devoted himself to the task of correcting the witness for her attitude of aloofness from the higher altruism which bids the have-nots take from the haves. Lord Jean Jacques Rousseau could not be more unctuously munificent at other people's expense.

I copy again the League organ's report:—

MRS. BLAKE, of Renvyle, was examined, and tendered a number of figures to show that the officially-supplied list of non-resident graziers was incorrect.

THE CHAIRMAN—What is this all to prove?—That the information given in by the Clerk of the Union is not accurate as showing the acreage held by the graziers whom it is proposed to deprive of their holdings.

You have a good deal of untenanted land in your possession?
—I have a certain amount.

And there are a number of small, poor holdings adjoining?
—Yes; and if you want to add any land to them, I don't see why you should propose to take any of mine (laughter). I don't see why you should do an injustice to any decent Irish man or woman for the benefit of another.

You think these poor people, with three acres, do not want any more?—I say they are doing very well.

You think it is right for one person to hold 300 or 400 acres, whilst a number of persons are obliged to struggle on on three or four acres? (a laugh).

WITNESS—I only say there is no land there for distribution, when I want it for myself (laughter).

When the Ribbon Order holds its next demonstration at the New Congestion Cathedral of Donegal, could the Bishop of the Board himself devise a finer appeal to the finest feelings of the Ancient Order than that statesmanlike question :—

“ You think it is right for one person to hold 300 or 400 acres whilst a number of poor people are obliged to struggle on on three or four acres ? ”

It is superfluous to inquire if this is the rule in the Dudley Estates Office, or if it be strictly reserved for experimentation on the *corpore vili* of Irish landed property.

FROM THE ARRANGED COMMISSION TO THE POLITICAL SACRISTY.

A different sort of interest will be stimulated by the next illustration of the mentality of the Arranged Commissioners, which reaches me as these pages are going to press. From Jean Jacques Rousseau on universal philanthropy we are translated to the political sacristy, the electioneering Bishop, and the little arrangements which lead from a Royal Commission of Non-inquiry to a League seat in Parliament.

In my list of the members of the Commission given at an early page, I mentioned the name of Mr. Walter Kavanagh, Barrister-at-law, without any note or commentary. I had been assured, indeed, that the Supreme Management had chosen him in consequence of their just certainty as to his policy. He would be found on the side of the crozier and the hazel. As, however, Mr. Walter Kavanagh's private virtues had as yet received no public endorsement, I was content to pass his name in silence. I am indebted to a Propaganda Bishop and to Mr. Walter Kavanagh himself for the completer light on the attractions of this competitor for favours. I find in the daily Press this illuminating appeal of an Episcopal grand

elector to the sacristies of his dominion on behalf of the Commissioner as a worthy colleague of Messrs. Ginnell, Sheehy, Gywnn, etc. :—

“ Dr. Foley, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, writes to a Nationalist paper in Carlow advocating the candidature of Mr. Walter Kavanagh for the Parliamentary vacancy caused by the death of Mr. Hammond. Mr. Kavanagh, Dr. Foley writes, is *the one man of his class in the county* who, so far as he is aware, availed himself of the first opportunity that presented itself in making a striking declaration in favour of the higher education of Roman Catholics.”

The Commissioner backs up the episcopal warrantly with a modest note of self-estimation :—

“ Mr. Kavanagh in a letter states that he is not a devolutionist and that he left the Reform Association as soon as he knew their programme. He believes in the party pledge and will sit, act, and vote with the Nationalist party. He is a Home Ruler on the lines of Mr. Gladstone’s Bill, *and he is in favour of a Roman Catholic University and of the State’s acquiring the grazing ranches for distribution.*”

We might at once conclude from the episcopal commendation that the Commissioner was also what is known in Ireland as an Accommodating Protestant or Protestant supporter of Maynoothism in all its pretensions. We know now from Mr. Walter Kavanagh’s own effusion that he clasps the Double Policy to his heart of hearts. He wants to plant the lazzaroni of the Board on the grass lands, and the pupils of the seminaries on the university—both at the expense of the taxpayer.

The Bishop’s intermeddling in politics would be mere impertinence in any other country. In that Foreign Mission called Ireland it is the supreme factor of the situation. The Arranged Commissioner becomes M.P. for the Sacristy at Westminster.

I am reminded that there is a whole army of employees under the Board, all practically chosen by the political clergy and all imbued with the theories of the political clergy. "Plenty of public money for distribution by the Board and the parish committees" is the maxim which they iterate with painful sameness. It is the maxim which will secure their employment by the Board. There is a sum of £31,000 annually absorbed in salaries by these employees, which can help us partially to understand the influence of the patronage exerted by the clergy. In addition to the 2,000 agents of a quasi-voluntary character on the parochial committees, we have, besides, a swarm of needy hangers-on who derive a casual gain from semi-casual employment as local servitors of sorts appointed by the priest and paid by the taxpayer.

A very superior member of the official staff, Mr. Doran, Chief Land Inspector of the Board, is a most favourable specimen of the highest type of Board employee. In reading in his own evidence the account of his views, one is struck, however, by the continued revelation of the strange sort of mendicant Ireland which it is the policy of the Board to create and perpetuate. Has land to be fenced? Wire fencing would be both cheaper and better. The Board puts up an inferior article in order to employ the population! "Ordinary wire fencing would have done better than walls, and would have cost less; but I suggested that the Board should have a wall erected and pay the people for making it." And the special excuse for this curious proceeding was that the people were in debt to the Board, and so this way was invented, dear and inferior fencing instead of cheap and superior, to enable the people to pay the debt!

MR. DORAN—The tenants were told that they could earn what they owed by the construction of the wall.

MR. SUTHERLAND—What did it cost?

MR. DORAN—About £1,600.

SIR FRANCIS MOWATT—What would wire fencing cost?

MR. DORAN—About £1,000.

That is how this Board wipes out arrears on its failures, wastes the public money, and then bids the Land League peasantry compare the generosity of the political clergy with the miserable heartlessness of the wicked landlords! It might have been honester to present "the tenants" with £600 and put up the superior fencing.

THE BOARD CLERICS AS M.P. MAKERS.

It is easy to understand how a political clergy commanding such resources must become absolutely irresistible dispensers of seats in Parliament, etc. If they felt any moral obligation to refrain from political agitation in the districts in which they are masters of the public purse, the case would be less grave. But it is precisely in such districts that they organise Ribbon demonstrations, nominate candidates for Parliament, and so forth. To cite the example of no less significant a personage than the Bishop of the Board himself and his parish committees, here is what we find on the nomination paper of the member for Donegal East elected at the last election:—

NOMINATORS OF MR. C. McVEIGH, JANUARY, 1906.

Most Rev. Dr. O'Donnell, Bishop of Raphoe.

Rev. Canon Doherty, P.P.

Rev. C. McGlynn, P.P.

Rev. E. McDevitt, P.P.

Etc., etc., etc.

Similarly, how possibly could the guardians of Glenties union, inundated with the bounties of the Congested Board, hesitate an instant to elect "the nephew of our noble Bishop" as master of the

workhouse at the mandatory appeal of Father M'Fadden, P.P.? Similar revelations of the action of the Congested Board clergy can be gleaned in every constituency from north to south. Let us look for the nominators of Mr. John Dillon, M.P., for instance. No less redoubtable a patron than Father Denis O'Hara, P.P., the Board's own agricultural member, helped to manufacture the membership of Mr. John Dillon. Thus:—

NOMINATORS OF MR. JOHN DILLON, JANUARY, 1906.

Rev. Denis O'Hara, P.P.

Rev. M. Keaveny, P.P.

Rev. J. McDonnell, P.P.

Rev. M. Henry, P.P.

Surely the very least that should be required from the members of a public organisation engaged in the lavish grant of public money is to leave the nomination to political positions in hands less engaged in the distribution of pecuniary benefactions among the electorate. The man in the moon, that potent influence in electoral corruption, is forbidden to benefit the cause of a candidate by a single shilling; but the priestly manufacturers of what are called "representatives of the people" in Ireland are free to rain a rain of gold upon the constituencies before, during, and after the contest. How many of the indigent electors of Mayo East, for instance, would wish to question Father Denis O'Hara's selection of Mr. John Dillon as a member of Parliament? There is no need to forget that succinct piece of information contributed by Mr. T. M. Healy, M.P., which I have already quoted, and which told us how Mr. John Morley, as Chief Secretary, placed on the Congested Districts Board "Mr. Dillon's chief supporter in the West." Mr. John Dillon gets his great supporter made a member of the Great Benefaction Board, and the great supporter gets the great Mr. Dillon made a Benefaction

Board Member-of-Parliament. And I am quite certain that neither the great supporter nor the great supported had ever the slightest doubt as to the perfect orthodoxy of the transaction. £500,000 for East Mayo!

* * * * *

It is superfluous to speculate upon the electoral hosts of expectant and servile lazzaroni who would hail the extension of the Congested Districts Parochial Committees throughout the whole of Ireland. It can almost be said that the Congested Board Benefactions are calculated to reach every class of elector in the country. If he be poor, they "nourish" him. If he be fairly off, they "encourage" him. If he is ignorant, the benefaction is to "elevate and enlighten" him. If he is lazy it is to "stimulate" him. If he is strenuous it is to "reward" him. If he is progressive it is to "enlarge his opportunity." One man must be "coaxed" to take the dunghill off the doorstep. Another is "assisted" to start an industry that he will never know, or that he will go to America to practise, as soon as he has learned it. In everything and for everybody the political priests are supreme arbiters and condescending benefactors, at the taxpayer's expense. Never were the lines of lavish philanthropy laid in such pleasant places. The *ateliers nationaux* of the France of 1848 had no such gorgeous times. The Neapolitan lazzaroni's appreciation of life under such circumstances should, barring the climate, transport all Santa Lucia to Mayo and Donegal. Yet in spite of the benefactions, and in spite of the Ribbon Lodges, and in spite of the Member-of-Parliament manufacture, drink and destitution, emigration and tuberculosis continue, as they have continued, to dog the paradise of class-overthrowers and convention-packers, of exported herrings and imported convents. "You have failed in everything" is the melancholy comment of Lord Dudley. "You have only touched

the fringe of the question " is the utmost encouragement of the Anglo-Indian optimist. " Give us a few millions sterling a year to spend as we like " is the unfaltering panacea of the most political Most Reverends.

* * * * *

The show villages of the Congested Board quite resemble nothing in history so much as the show villages which the ingenious Prince Potjemkin built along the road taken by his Imperial mistress, Catherine II., on her journey through Russia a century and a half ago. The Board actually boasts that the valuation of the congested districts over a period of 10 years has actually improved 2 *per cent.*! Not 20 per cent. nor 200 per cent., but 2 per cent. Think of that now! Unfortunately in the same period the population of the same districts diminished 8 *per cent.* In spite of a microscopic increase in the average value of their holdings, as divided per head of population, of no less than two shillings and fivepence annually, the total population has sunk by 8 per cent. Even the half-crown less one penny which the Board claims to have secured per annum to the happy denizens of Congestia, has failed to keep some 60,000 or 70,000 Irishmen and women from escaping anywhere from so much benefaction and so many political and ghostly fathers! And still the song of the Board goes on unceasing: " Let us go on extending our experiments, and hang the expense "!

Hang the expense is the dominant, the all-pervading note in every brazen-faced claim which comes from representatives of the Ribbon and United Leagues. That Mr. John FitzGibbon, whom I have quoted already in consequence of his representative position in the witness chair as delegate of the Central Council of the United League, to which the Bishop of the Board is treasurer of the parliamentary fund; this

League leader simply and unblushingly stated that in order to execute the League policy of the total expulsion of the gentry from the country, it was the taxpayers who ought to pay any compensation which an over-fastidious sense of justice might feel to be due to the gentry. Mr. John FitzGibbon is as kindhearted and intelligent a representative as the League could possibly produce, from all I have heard about him ; but see the crazy communism with which he has been imbued :

MR. JOHN FITZGIBBON—This is the task which the Commission should have before it, of recommending that the British treasury supply as many millions as will be necessary to bring the people back to the land. I have not the least objection to the landlords receiving a substantial sum for their services to English rule in Ireland. But I don't consider that the tenant farmers of Ireland are under any obligation to contribute to pensioning off the old English garrison.

With such views the League can proceed to cattle driving with an approving conscience. It is equally evident that it must be regarded as in the highest degree unjust to persist in asking "the tenant farmers of Ireland" even to pay the instalments on the purchase of their holdings. Let the taxpayers pay "as many millions as will be necessary."

By the way, I find that one of Bishop O'Donnell's highest dignitaries in the diocese, the Right Rev. Monsignor M'Glynn, shares with Mr. John FitzGibbon the highest distinctions of the United League. As an example of the political priest in the superlative degree, I quote Monsignor M'Glynn's introduction of himself to the Commission :

LORD DUDLEY—You are a member of the Donegal county committee ?

RIGHT REV. MONSIGNOR M'GLYNN—Yes.

LORD DUDLEY—You were asked to appear here by the Stranorlar district council ?

RIGHT REV. MONSIGNOR M'GLYNN—Yes, and I am also instructed by the national directory of the United Irish League in Dublin. I am a member of the county committee of

agriculture, the committee of technical instruction, and a member of the council of agriculture in Dublin, and secretary to the Roman Catholic Board of education in Donegal.

The latter office should be nearly a sinecure; and certainly agriculture, as the Monsignor understands it, must be a formidable competitor with the pastoral office. Unfortunately the whole enumeration illustrates very plainly how the political priest preoccupies all sorts of positions which belong to lay life and lay occupation. It is a droll way to train the people in self-government. But the position of representative of the "directory of the League" must rivet attention. We have already the Bishop of the Board as chairman and ex-chairman of League conventions, treasurer of the League parliamentary fund, etc. Here is his chief prelate the official representative of the governing body of the League! Very appropriately it was to this same potentate that the Bishop of the Board addressed his manifesto about "joining the toiling masses of England against the classes," etc. But what an impartial and non-political agency is this Congested Board!

Another dignitary of Donegal, the Very Rev. Canon M'Fadden, will illustrate equally the League demand for the money of the taxpayer. In examination by Lord Dudley, he bluntly stated that, when the Board purchased a farm for a tenant, it should be "handed over" to the tenant "in condition for occupation at the average rent of the locality, irrespective of what the expenditure was in putting it into that condition." This distinctly staggered the much-enduring chairman, and he begged the Canon to repeat:

LORD DUDLEY—Oh, irrespective altogether of what it cost?

CANON M'FADDEN—Irrespective altogether of the expenditure. *That is the meaning of relieving congestion.* It is a necessary condition.

What can such teachings and influence produce but a class of selfish and sluggish lazzaroni quite

unsurpassed for sluggish selfishness in the entire world? We can remember that awful school at Annagry, where the miserable children, cooped within the insanitary shed-like den, had to stand imbibing tuberculosis *on two feet square of floor space* per child, though £10,000 a year were coming in from the fisheries started by the Duke of Abercorn; and though the new Congestion cathedral at Letterkenny was raising its pious pride of marble columns and soaring steeples to the tune of scores of thousands of pounds sterling. But even that scandal is in a way companioned by those Donegal peasants who, unoccupied during several months in the year, will not make a road of half a furlong to their own doors, unless they are paid by somebody to do it! The student of the evidence is indebted to a Presbyterian clergyman, Rev. Mr. Bewglas, for blurting out this illuminating fact. Again the chairman, Lord Dudley, had to acknowledge himself surprised by those extraordinary claimants for public money. What! Half a dozen able bodied men, in want of a short road to the main thoroughfare, and having the land, the stone, and their own strong arms to make this improvement for their own use, refuse to lift a spade?

LORD DUDLEY—Cannot they make the road themselves?

REV. MR. BEWGLAS—It is very difficult to get them to work together without some inducement.

LORD DUDLEY—When you speak of a group of three or four houses is it unreasonable that these men during the winter in the slack season should work together in or ler to make a road up to the houses?

REV. MR. BEWGLAS—It is not unreasonable, but it is difficult to get them to do it without some inducement. They will go on as their fathers have done before them.

LORD DUDLEY—It is quite possible without any expert knowledge to make a road? They have only to cut the bog and put down the stones?

REV. MR. BEWGLAS—That is all.

Pity the poor lazzaroni of the Congested Board. They want a couple of hundred yards of road to their

doors. There are three or four families of them, strong men, in the slack season. In a week or a fortnight they could nearly make the much-needed improvement, which is entirely for their own use and profit. Unless they are paid by the taxpayer they will make no road! They will spend the week smoking and gossiping, instead; perhaps, going to clerico-Ribbonman meetings for the universal expulsion of "good-for-nothing landlords."

What kind of moral training have these unmanly, mendicant louts got for years? That avowal of the Most Rev. Dr. Boylan of Kilmore comes back on the memory: "We are not industrious, like the people of England and Scotland"; and we fancy the indignant retort of the lazzaroni of the Board: "Why should we take the trouble to be industrious, when the Board is going to give us all the property of the Protestant gentry for nothing at all?"

POSTSCRIPT.

My attention has been directed to the testimony of another Catholic prelate, Most Rev. Dr. Healy, Archbishop of Tuam, to the incorrigible sloth of another population in the congested districts. Speaking in Church on April 17, 1906, Archbishop Healy expressed this candid opinion to his hearers:—

"In no other part of the world is agriculture in such a deplorable condition as in the West of Ireland. . . . You do not cultivate a sufficient acreage, and what you do cultivate gets only an apology for cultivation. . . . You do not deserve to be called farmers. You make a few spasmodic efforts at spring and autumn, *and you sleep the rest of the year.*"

And why not? The poor fellows are expecting the Congested Board to pay them for cultivating their farms, like in Mr. John Dillon's Half Million Sterling Constituency of East Mayo.

HOW NOT TO SEE.

DRUNKENNESS AND SUBSIDIES—AVOIDING EVIDENCE—
AN IRISH JOURNAL ON A CONGESTED STEEPLE—
THE FILTHINESS OF A THOUSAND PRIEST-
MANAGED SCHOOLS—MR. JOHN DILLON'S ELECTORS.

THE Board's Own Irish Lazzaroni—they are a curious and significant product. The anarchist agrarianism has filled them up with crude socialism. The political priest has crushed all the initiative out of them. The priest-managed school, which stunted their minds in youth, has ingrained the lesson of dirt, ignorance, and leave-it-alone. Their most revered leaders, whom they regard with superstitious awe, tell them, Why should you work for Protestant robbers? * Their favourite orators are always ready to explain that Irishmen cannot have good roads or a house free from the manure heap at the door because the English—bad luck to them—destroyed the Irish manufactures hundreds of years ago! And

* A deplorable consequence of the increased influence given to the political clergy by the Government's patronage of their sectarianism in university education and their control of the Congestion Subsidies is the increased bitterness of their hostility towards our Protestant countrymen. Even the Gaelic Language Movement, whose fundamental claim was to be independent of religious differences among Irishmen, is being seized by the political priests, especially in the Congested Districts—to use the official verbiage—in order to embitter religious strife. The *Peasant*, of the 14th December last, mentions the case of a man at Westport “who was excluded from the Gaelic League for having taught the Irish language to Protestants. In various other parts of Connacht the theory that the Gaelic League is open to Irish men and women of all creeds has been abandoned in practice; *the Protestants are kept out.*” Toleration and the Political Priesthood! Did the Commission expect figs from thistles or grapes from thorns?

when a commission of inquiry comes to investigate their condition and its causes, it has been so carefully prearranged and packed, that every promising trail is at once stopped or turned aside by the party of judicious obscuration. "It was wonderful," remarked the author of "Economics for Irishmen," "how cleverly the Commission avoided asking what I was anxious to tell."

This is really the salient feature of the Commission : how they avoided asking what was most important to know ; how they were led away from every promising trail just when it seemed that they really must begin to inquire.

Take, for instance, the prevalence of drunkenness in those districts of backwardness and tax-paid benefactions. The Commissioners were getting hints in all quarters and from all sorts of witnesses. The farmers or the fishermen had to drink because they got credit from the grocer ; they had to drink because they had borrowed money from the publican ; they had to drink for this reason, and for that. But the hints were wasted on the Commission. Attention was turned to something else. At last a sturdy witness, a Mr. James Boyle, an intelligent shopkeeper from the country town of Carrick, seems to have made up his mind to force the facts on the shy inquiry. He stated plainly that a lot of the public subsidies were going in whisky, and he wanted the drink houses closed. He was at once met by the Bishop of the Board with the assurance that he (the Bishop) did not see any of the drunkenness ! When a Bishop is so deeply immersed in politics, Dublin conventions, Ribbonman demonstrations, consultations with Sir Antony, he may be pardoned for an inexact vision of his diocese. No man can serve two masters. But let us hear the plain speaking Mr. Boyle, of Carrick :—

LORD DUDLEY—Is there any particular point you would like to bring before the Commission ?

MR. JAMES BOYLE—I think the first and greatest improvement in our district, and all over the congested districts, is that the Congested District Board would have power to close all the public-houses in the congested districts—compulsory power—because a lot of the money that is earned by fishing and other industries goes foolishly in drink. A lot of money is spent this way, and there is no remedy except to close all the public-houses.

LORD DUDLEY—In your district are there many public-houses?

MR. JAMES BOYLE—There are five, I believe, in the village of Carrick, and one in Teelin, a fishing centre, and two in Meenanery, and two in Glencolumbkill; *that is all in the one parish*. . . There is more money spent in public-houses.

BISHOP O'DONNELL—Do you at all now see a man going along the road taking the two sides of the road?

MR. JAMES BOYLE—I do.

BISHOP O'DONNELL—I must say I don't meet it at all. Do you go outside your own district?

MR. JAMES BOYLE—No, except from Carrick to Glenties.

BISHOP O'DONNELL—In that district do you seriously say that there is not a noticeable improvement in the temperance of the people?

MR. JAMES BOYLE—There may be; but I believe that the very class that are getting State aid are the most liable to lose the money in the way I have suggested.

Now I do not think it is unfair to the Bishop of the Board to say that his attitude and his examination were distinctly calculated to belittle and invalidate the very serious evidence of this respectable witness on a very serious matter for all Ireland. First came the jocular allusion to a drunkard as "a man taking the two sides of the road"; that was hardly in keeping with the gravity of the issue. Then there was the irrelevant assertion volunteered by this influential Commissioner that he "does not meet at all" instances of this intoxication. What had Bishop O'Donnell's personal non-experience, moving in his important sphere, terrestrial and celestial, to do with the reeking pothouses of Carrick, Glencolumbkill, etc., except to make the witness understand that the Bishop of the Board was against him?

And from the moment of the intervention of the

Bishop, the other Commissioners grew incurious and restrained. No attempt, of course, to examine into the situation at Carrick, not even an inquiry to the local chief of police. Yet the Commission had received the formal declaration of a respectable witness that the classes most advantaged by State aid were most addicted to the public-house.

I should not forget to mention that the Commission studiously avoided everywhere consulting the police, that well-known mine of local information in Ireland, upon the condition of the country anywhere within their purview. It never occurred to the complacent Under-Secretary that a grey-haired sergeant of constabulary could tell more about the protegees of the parish committees in an hour than the whole Congested Board could explain away in a week.

The evidence which has been sent to me personally from earnest and religious members of the constabulary on this very subject of drink houses and drunkenness in the congested districts, and the masterly inactivity of the political clergy as connected therewith, has left no doubt upon my mind that there is better priestly work to be done in the west of Ireland than benedicting landlord-driving or cattle-driving. But the public-house is the financial prop of the Political Church. It shares with the political sacristy the manufacture of members of Parliament. An Arranged Commission does not deal rashly with such sacred interests.

* * * * *

The evidence and the verdict had been prearranged as carefully as possible by the managers of the Commission. Five-sixths of the witnesses were paid by the Board, hoping to be paid by the Board, or were notorious advocates of the Ribbon and Land League programme of estates confiscation and priest rule. A few spokesmen of landlord interests were discounted before their testimony, as

advocates of a defeated and unpopular cause. There was a remarkable absence of manufacturers, bankers, employers, political economists. The children of the horse-leech marched at the word of command, and the horse-leech is the Political Church. The offer of evidence from the independent public was resented as an encroachment. When one of the ablest of Irish economic writers, Mr. P. J. Kenny, literally forced himself on the reluctant inquiry, he had to complain of studied discourtesy, attempted browbeating, appeals to mob violence, threats of assassination.

One verdict was pressed upon the Commissioners by every method of organised recommendation and organised exclusion: "The Congested District Board is the saviour of Ireland. It cannot have too many Political Priests. It cannot have too much public money. Let the Priest Managers and the Priest Committees spend, decide, select, reject; endow convents, expropriate estates; promote favouritism, prevent criticism, englobe everything." Nothing more simple. For the success of this policy it was necessary that the Commissioners, even selected, should not be over-inquiring. For this reason the Commissioners avoided following clues, when even the selected witnesses let drop a clue; avoided investigation, even when the need of investigation ran against their faces. The Commissioners marched with docility to hear and see what was prepared for their hearing and seeing. Two or three Commissioners often succeeded by sheer ability and acumen in striking sparks of light out of the fog. At the best their conclusions will not be endorsed by the Commission. Compromise is the indicated resource of Dublin Castle. Under compromise, the nation is sometimes promised a purse, and the Political Church invariably gets the contents.

* * * * *

There has just come to my hand a piece of Irish opinion, which is at the same time a corroboration

of my protest against the deliberate blindness of the Arranged Commission to every fact of Irish life and misery which the clerical managers are interested in ignoring. It is contained in an article in that able and courageous organ of popular views, the *Peasant*, which Cardinal Logue succeeded in suppressing for its outspokenness for three weeks, but which has risen from the dead with every sign of vigorous vitality derived from popular support. In contrast with the Bishop of the Board's inability to see a drunken man, perhaps through closing his eyes, the *Peasant* laments "the drunkenness which is desolating the country"; upon the clerical domination and destruction of the schools, it states emphatically that the root evil of the educational system is there being "no element of popular control and very little to attract capable young men to the teaching profession," adding an indignant denunciation of "the 1,000 school-houses which are without out-offices."

But what is most germane of all, perhaps, to the neglected duty of the Commission, is the testimony of the *Peasant* to the drain of money from the people for the architectural megalomania of the Churchmen even in districts like Kerry, Donegal, etc., where at the same time the political clergy are cadging on the taxpayer for huge subsidies to the Congested Board and its Parish Committees, and where, unquestionably, the Irish lazzaroni are steeped in degradation rare in Europe. I quote the statement as it stands. It is an entire confirmation of my own remarks at a former page:—

"At the present time enormous sums of money are being collected in County Kerry in order to add a steeple to the cathedral in Killarney, while within a stone's throw of the Bishop's palace in that town there are lanes which probably would not be tolerated in a West African village."

If the Commission had wanted evidence there was plenty. Perhaps, if they had done anything so

shocking to their masters as to look for it and to listen to it, its effect might have moved them to the most extraordinary behaviour. Perhaps even they might have recommended all those reverend and most reverend managers of 1,000 school-houses "without out-offices" to devote a part of those "enormous sums of money," not to pseudo-Gothic steeples and pulpits of Carrara marble in filthy villages, but, say, to building "out-houses" for the filth-in-doctrinating and disease-disseminating schools of priest-ridden Ireland. There were Catholic saints, even Popes, who melted the golden vessels of the altar for almsgiving. Will it ever strike Royal Commissions of Inquiry in Ireland that the domineering clerics whom they follow are not exactly patterns of a Christian pastorate?

* * * * *

There is one palliation for the political clergy which, as I have often intimated, is also one of the gravest factors of the situation. Outside their professional studies they have little superiority over their cattle drivers and gombeen men. Like them, their oracle is the *Freeman's Journal*. Their political harangues are indistinguishable from the ruck of the League orators. One deficiency is peculiarly their own. They have no sense of financial responsibility. Never giving an account to their parishioners, it would take a moral earthquake to make them more delicate towards the taxpayer.

Take that astounding saturnalia of cant and cadging, the waste of the half million sterling which has been transferred from the taxpayers to the use of Mr. John Dillon's pauper electorate of East Mayo. In an English or Scotch constituency, if half a million sterling of public money were distributed among the electors of the sitting member by his most intimate

friends and political allies, by his proposers and nominators for the parliamentary representation, we should all know what to think of the proceeding. I am sure that not even a suspicion of anything extraordinary has even crossed the mind of Mr. John Dillon. As well expect censure from Mr. Dillon's colleague of the League executive, that Mr. Fitzgibbon who wants "the millions of the British Treasury" to put back the people on the land!

Among the lazzaroni of the Board Mr. Dillon's lazzaroni occupy no mean or diffident position. Let the author of "Economics for Irishmen" relate his observations during a walk in the very heart of that constituency of East Mayo which returns Mr. Dillon to Parliament, to denounce "the drones of landlordism" and to formulate the requirements of higher education:—

"On a fine working day last winter I walked fourteen statute miles in a congested district in Mayo, from Swinford to Ballyhaunis. . . . In the whole journey I saw "at work" only one man, who had his hands in his pockets. . . . I saw not one acre yet ploughed, and the winter weeds were strengthening their hold on next year's potato fields. . . . The Congested Districts Board had bodies of men, paid wages out of the taxes to do their own work"!

Why should Mr. Dillon's electors be expected to work for themselves, when Mr. Dillon's own Congested Board is ready to pay them out of the taxes—another half million sterling?

IRELAND A NATURAL TIMBER COUNTRY OF THE FIRST CLASS.

“The conditions in England and Scotland, but especially in Ireland, are more favourable to the growth of profitable timber than those of most Continental forests. Professor Schlich, whose reputation as a forest authority is world-wide, says that as regards climate there is practically nothing better to be desired so far as the production of timber is concerned. . . . Every year a fast-increasing sum, amounting to about £27,000,000, is paid away to other countries for timber and wooden goods which could be equally well produced in Ireland.”

Evidence of Lord Castletown before Congested Commission.

“Ireland was formerly well-wooded. . . . In comparison with great timber-producing countries, such as Russia and Norway, it is very favourably circumstanced. . . . *Potentially one of the best timber-producing countries*, it is now, with the exception of Portugal, the least wooded of Europe.”

Evidence of Mr. J. L. Pigot, Adviser in Forestry, before the Congested Commission.

THE TENANT PURCHASERS DESTROY TIMBER.

SIR JOHN COLOMB—Is it not the case that, generally speaking, in Ireland the people are wholly unsympathetic, if not hostile, to occupying land with trees?

LORD CASTLETOWN—I think there is that feeling among them. I do not think they understand the value of them here.

Evidence before the Congested Commission.

LORD DUDLEY—Is it in your knowledge that since the Act of 1903 a great many trees have been cut down?

MR. J. L. PIGOT—The Land Act of 1903 has aggravated the position. The working of the Act has led directly to the rapid, reckless, and improvident felling of trees. . . . Taking the whole country, the amount of timber in Ireland is being enormously reduced, and in many parts of the country the tenant purchasers have cut down timber extensively, and in some parts almost cleared the country of trees.

Evidence before the Congested Commission.

MORE LIGHT ON SIR HORACE PLUNKETT'S DISMISSAL.

IN an article in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, Mr. George A. Birmingham, the able Irish Nationalist writer, confirms the account of the dismissal of Sir Horace Plunkett through the clerico-gombeen influence in Mr. Redmond's party operating on Dublin Castle. The Bishop of the Board is the leading patron, and probably the principal leader—perhaps on behalf of Propaganda—of Mr. Redmond's party:—

The truth is that Mr. Redmond and his party dislike the co-operative movement, because it is securing prosperity for the Irish farmer, is emancipating him from the control of the local shopkeeper. And the local shopkeeper, publican, usurer, emigration agent, gombeen man is a great support of "the party." Therefore the dismissal of Sir Horace Plunkett was engineered, and we were treated to the pitifully sordid farce of last May. Mr. T. W. Russell succeeded Sir Horace. The Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, it was supposed, would die a lingering death. Co-operative societies would cease to exist, and everything would return to the condition of the dear dead days when the farmer had to vote at elections as his creditor told him. Of which state of things we have a fine example in the saying of a gombeen man in a non-co-operative district, which was quoted in a paper the other day: "I've five thousand pounds out on loan through the country, and there isn't a member of the district council but would have to stand on his head in the board-room if I bade him."

THE RESULTS OF BLINDFOLDING—LONDON AND ROME—THE DEAD HAND FOR EVER!

LIST OF NON-INQUIRIES—WHAT IRELAND MIGHT BE—LORD CASTLETOWN'S EXPERIMENT—THE SECRET SERVICE OF THE SACRISTY—THE COOLIE MISSION—DUBLIN CASTLE AND THE DEAD HAND.

IT would be an endless enumeration to say all that the Commission of Inquiry did not inquire into. An abbreviated list of omissions may be illustrative or instructive :—

1. The Commission did not investigate the connection between decaying tillage and the political encouragement of *under-cultivation for the lowering of land rents and land values*, nor the connection between under-cultivation and want of employment with consequent poverty and depopulation.
2. The Commission did not investigate the connection between drink and non-industry, nor the connection between the drink trade and clerical finance. "Sure the trade has built half the churches in Ireland."
3. The Commission did not investigate that almost universal curse of Irish industry, the money-lender-grocer, or credit-grocer, or gombeen usurer, charging 50 and 100 per cent. on the commodities bought by his debtor, in addition to the usurious rate of interest on the loan, but able, through his clerical and political allies, to drive Sir Horace Plunkett from office for trying to check his thieving.

4. The Commission did not investigate the connection between non-industry and the campaign against property and liberty preached by supporters of the Board, Land Leaguers, Political Priests, Boycotters.
5. The Commission did not investigate the connection between non-industry and *the six thousand priest-managed schools, with their lessons of ignorance, uncleanness, unhealthiness, discouragement and fatalism.*
6. The Commission did not investigate the connection between lacemaking, embroidering, laundering, shirtmaking, dressmaking, etc., for the conventual factories and the injury to lay employment and home life.
7. The Commission did not investigate the connection between the clerical monopoly of direction and control of the best-paid positions in technical schools and the emigration of the pupils of those schools.
8. The Commission did not investigate the connection between the immense burthen of *clerical extortions from the laity* at all the crises of life and the spread of poverty and unemployment.
9. The Commission did not investigate *the huge drain of Irish capital in legacies and collections*, on all kinds of ecclesiastical pretexts; nor enquire whether the colossal mass of priestly and conventual investments was in Irish undertakings or in foreign securities and speculations.
10. The Commission did not investigate the connection between non-employment and the habit of Irish capitalists to hoard their money in banks—the hoard now being £60,000,000—instead of financing Irish farming and manufactures. What exactions do the capitalists fear in Ireland? What insecurity? Whose dishonesty?

11. The Commission did not investigate the connection between non-industry, due to physical deterioration, leading to poverty and pauperism, and the increasing substitution of unhealthy food, tea, etc., most frequently owing to the influence of the loan-grocer or gombeen grocer.
12. The Commission did not investigate the avowed waste of public money in reckless experiments in forestry, fisheries, etc., without skilled knowledge or independent control.

I do not maintain necessarily that upon all these points the answer, supposing the inquiry had taken place, would have been exactly what I have been led to accept. Neither do I question the sincerity of any members of the Board or Commission from one end of their transactions to the other. I am not discussing the honesty of individuals from their standpoint and belief, but the disadvantage of the system which they represent and apply. Every member of the Board, from Bishop O'Donnell down, can be freely admitted to have acted according to convictions which were to them the highest and the most obligatory. Every Member of the Commission can receive a similar recognition. But this does not diminish my opposition to the whole system under which they acted, and which selected them for such action.

I may add four other inquirable matters of the first importance about which there has also been no inquiry:

13. There has been no investigation of *the loss of employment through the diminution in the class of employers*, caused by Ireland having been made an unpleasant or unprofitable place for numbers of Irishmen in recent years.
14. There has been no investigation of the impediments thrown in the way of migration to other parts of Ireland; though, in spite of menace and boycotting, a responsible witness, supported by a

letter from another witness, described the hostility of the clergy to the removal of any of the show paupers of their interested solicitude. The managers of the Commission are hostile to such exposures, and the Commission was dumb.

15. There has been no investigation of *the relations between the Ribbon lodges and the members of the Board*, their agents and allies. Yet everybody in Ireland can speak of the intimacy of those relations, and their connexion with the whole movement for altering the distribution of property and overthrowing "the ascendancy of the classes," to use the expression of a representative of the Jacobin class in the ascendant in contemporary Ireland.
16. There has been no investigation of the relations, the intimate relations, between the Priest-Gombeen supremacy on all kinds of Local Boards and the opposition to every measure of enlightenment and intellectual improvement which could raise the capacity for rational thought and action in the community. As I write these words, there comes the news, the stereotyped kind of news, that the Navan Rural Council in Meath has rejected a motion to establish Public Libraries in consequence of the direct protests and condemnations addressed to the Council by the parish priests! Even a former seconder of the motion declared he withdrew his support "in deference to the clergy." These clergy are the Parish Committees of the Congested Board.

I am aware of the tightness of the Reference which limits the investigations of the Commission; and it is common knowledge that the Reference was intended to direct and force the Commission into the foregone conclusion of ignoring everything but the extension of the powers and the endowments of the Congestion Board. Let it be so. Yet, if we take the clumsy

fiction of Congestion in its only true sense of general unemployment and consequent poverty, there is ample warrant for honest and serious inquiry even in the official directions to the Commission "to inquire into and report upon what changes in law or administration are needed for dealing as a whole with the problem of *General Unemployment and Consequent Poverty* and generally for bettering the condition of the people in areas of Unemployment and Poverty." There is certainly no obligation in these words to close eyes and ears to every consideration of Ireland's condition except increasing the area and the means of pauperisation and corruption in the hands of clerical revolutionists and their parasites or instruments.

Let us imagine, for one bright instant of self-delusion, that "the condition of the people has been bettered" in all the respects and matters which now promote unemployment and poverty. Under-cultivation and slothful tillage have disappeared with the suppression of the lay and clerical agitators against industry and honesty; and scores of thousands of hardy and skilful labourers have come south and east to earn good wages for snug homes west of the Shannon and north of the Erne. The ravages of the drink shop are no longer promoted by the financial calculations of the sacristy; and the grocer-usurer and the publican-usurer have lost their victims with the coming of industry and intelligence. In six thousand schools, while the minister of religion is welcome to teach religion, emancipated schoolmasters, sure of their future, educate in knowledge and civilisation hundreds of thousands of happy children, with no resemblance to the stunted minds and unkept bodies which used to make perpetual the degradation of Ireland. From the primary through the secondary and technical schools to the university the youth of the country advance, under their lay teachers of lay

culture, in the systematic attainment of the preparation for their various objects in life. The clergy receive becoming and ample stipends for the discharge of their spiritual functions, without the need or the temptation to burthen the population with the exactions of spoilers rather than pastors; and millions sterling no longer depart every year from the plundered land at the mandate of Foreign Superiors or under the inducement of foreign speculations. The money of the country, sixty millions or more, is no longer hoarded in the strong rooms of savings banks or devoted to the capitalisation of manufactures and undertakings abroad; but brings quintuple interest to its owners in sustaining and multiplying the industries which have grown up in Ireland with the new growth of security and civilisation. The pompous waste of ecclesiastical megalomania can no longer rob the orphan and the widow; nor the calculations of sectarianism divide the patriotism and envenom the division of kindly fellow-countrymen. Mansion and Farmhouse are seen to be both agencies of the national agriculture, and neither can replace the other. A stern protest from an Educated Laity has impressed the Vatican with the wisdom, so often imparted by Continental Catholicism, of sternly separating its Irish episcopate and priesthood from the unpriestly turmoil of politics and the indecent quest of social domination.

In such an Ireland there would be no room and no pretext for the demoralisation of mendicancy, clerical or lay; and the Congested Districts Board, false as its title, would be numbered with the degradations and the nightmares of the past.

It is with some justifiable pride that, in face of the present ruin, I can recall that I always protested against the evils which have been its main causes. My nationalist creed in the right of Ireland to be governed again by her King, Lords, and Commons excluded the very possibility of that Jacobin Mob

Domination which has been the work of the Sacristy and the League, for the Constitution would have been surrounded by precisely the same safeguards in Ireland as in England. I condemned the Land League from its first misshapen birth. I quitted Parliament rather than subscribe its programme of Class Hate and Confiscation. The Gladstonian Land Acts, which were so exactly to facilitate the work of the Ribbon Lodge, filled me with alarm and repugnance, and my letters to the *Times* of that day expressed my apprehensions and distrust. I grant that the Land Acts might have had a better issue, if there had been no Ribbon Lodge and no Political Priesthood. But why were these ignored by the Land Legislation? I saw at once what the Land League intended, even though it was by degrees that I realised the unscrupulous criminality which was its core. Both as regards the Agrarian Jacobinism and the Ribbon Priesthood my investigation was sharpened by my Continental experiences; but surely Continental experiences were also at the service of the Responsible Ministers. Nearly thirty years after the inception of the Land League, the officials of a Responsible Ministry continued to stuff the Congested Board and Commission with nominees and leaders of the same Agrarianism and the same Priesthood!

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Unquestionably ignorance, embodied above all in the priest-managed school and the priest-strangled university, is the foundation and the root of all that the Congestion Board represents and all that the Congestion Commission was arranged to perpetuate or conceal. Ignorance places a populace of lazzaroni at the feet of a political priesthood ruling by cupidity and fear. Ignorance places the priests themselves under the heel of a foreign mission, accustomed to sacrifice local rights to general designs. The end justifies!

Ignorance divides Irishmen. Ignorance combines in hostility to Ireland many classes and influences which endeavour with clouded vision to see a way to help and emancipation, but which only fling the nation, more tightly bound than ever, beneath the domination of the People of the Horseleech. Ignorance by itself might breed anarchism and sloth, the twin curses of the material condition, even if there were no clerics to assail every form of property still outside of their clutches, and no agitators to discourage thrift and labour with the promised gains of confiscation.

Ireland is poor because Irishmen are unemployed, and Irishmen are unemployed because Irishmen are idle, slovenly, envious of superiority, and unwilling to earn it; untaught to rise by honest effort, but taught to cheat, to menace, and to destroy as the easier road to the socialist paradise. When transported to lands where property is protected by the most rigid laws and still more rigid opinion, they can display all the virtues of iron industry, and can become the firmest supports of capitalist accumulation and territorial estate. They drive no cattle from ranches where the cattle-driver is shot on sight. How often have I heard from perspiring and prosperous immigrants: "Faith, a man must work here. It isn't like the old country." And the priest and bishop in America deliver homilies on the sanctity of law and the maintenance of order! *Cum calo animum mutant*. I heard an Irish-American say of the boys he left behind him: "Over there they can tell you who ought to be Prime Minister of Hungary, but they won't clean the manure from the doorstep." The Irish-American is finding the Irishman out. In America they have the captain of industry, and in Ireland the political priest with all his brood of agitators and mendicants.

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Everything which was not evasion, officialism, or cant that appeared at the Commission confirmed my statement at the outset of these pages, that there would be no poverty and no excuse for clerical socialism in the "congested districts" if one hundred thousand farmers throughout Ireland simply resolved to quit under-cultivation and to employ apiece a couple more labourers on their farms. Add to that a saving of even £2,000,000 a year out of that annual drink bill of £14,000,000; add to that a curtailment of the Poison Tea budget; add to that better cooking and better food, plenty of well-cooked fish included. There would then be a home market for double the catch of fish that was ever galvanised into unstable fact by the doles of congested pauperisers. And the occupation and the overlordship of the tax-paid providences in a thousand sacristies would be vanished for ever. No cadging, no clerics! *Point d'argent point de Suisse!* Perhaps no rate-paid situations for the nephews of noble bishops. Perhaps, even, no perjuries in jury boxes and on magisterial benches.

In immediate connection with my belief that the giving employment on an immensely increased scale by the indolent farmers of good lands throughout Ireland would solve five-sixths of this pretended problem of incurable poverty, I find valuable confirmation in the most valuable evidence of Lord Castletown. The evidence of Lord Castletown is most instructive also on the vast advantage and great facility of afforestation, which the ignorant peasantry have never been taught to appreciate, and which they hinder, in fact, with a sort of obstinate malice. A Land League farmer seems to hate a tree next to a landlord. But I quote Lord Castletown here for his testimony of the ease with which he recruited a magnificent body of labourers from Mayo, when he had good employment to offer them. Lord Castletown brought forty Mayo men in one troop to work

on his land in Queen's County. What he did with forty, a thousand improving farmers could do each with two, four, ten Mayo men, Sligo men, Donegal men, according to the extent and cultivation of the particular farms; and ten thousand labourers from the congested districts could quite as easily find kindly and profitable employment, profitable for the land as well as for the labourers, if only the malingering farmers chose to employ the labour, as Lord Castletown found it easy and profitable to employ it. Do I say ten thousand? There is work for a million more labourers on the fertile Irish soil if the farmers will turn to intensive cultivation, and if the political priest will go back to religion, and if the Land and Ribbon Leagues will go back to the father who begat them.

LORD CASTLETOWN—I look upon the men and women of the West as the very finest peasantry I know. They would be of enormous benefit to the rest of the country, and I have already found what a benefit they are if they are helped in the troubles they have at the present time. . . . *I had last year great difficulty in finding labour for some large work in my own county—Queen's County. I applied to some friends in Mayo, and forty Mayo men came down. . . . They settled down at my home for one month and a half or two months, and I gave them milk and potatoes. They were a magnificent type of men, both physically and mentally. They did the work and went home again. I asked a good many of them, if they would care to settle in my county, and they said yes, if they had a good house or cottage.*

SIR FRANCIS MOWATT—Was their work energetic?

LORD CASTLETOWN—Excellent. First-rate. My steward, who is a Scotchman, said it was the best work he ever had done. A very remarkable fact in connection with them was that they refused to eat the food of the country, which was white bread, with us. Each insisted upon having meal. These details bear on the whole question. *They insisted upon having milk for their drink, and they brought their own provender in the shape of ground-up oatmeal and flour.*

Certainly these details bear on the whole question. Lord Castletown did not go to any Parish Committee

for his Mayo men. Possibly he would have been told that Mayo men, even though they might travel to Scotland, would not, could not, should not, migrate to anywhere in Ireland. Sir Francis Mowatt's question about the "energetic" character of their work is plaintively suggestive. The Commissioner had heard so much about the feeble hothouse plants of Congested Boards that he did not expect energy. But these men had learned energy out of Ireland, in employment on English and Scottish farms, and they were immune from Congestion Mendicity Boards and Committees. And mark how they avoided the bread-and-tea of modern Irish degeneration. They, like their stalwart ancestors, felt that strong men cannot do strong men's work on the imported drugs of the gombeen grocer.

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The farce, or rather the dishonesty of placing on the Commission of Inquiry the chief official and zealot of the very Board under inquiry stamped the character of the whole manœuvre at the outset. Maynooth reposed again fondly in the arms of the Castle, and officialism's grateful care protected the useful clerics from unwelcome investigation. The Commission, with its mountains of irrelevant assertion, with its molehills of tolerated facts, fills the bulk of a dozen bluebooks. It has made the fog perhaps thicker. It has served its purpose. Even if the Board and its satellites are merely continued in their powers of waste and demoralisation it will be enough for an army of parasites. The sacristies and their committees will continue to manufacture paupers and members of Parliament in the future as in the past. The exactions of the horseleech will suffer no abatement. If, on the other hand, the privileges of the School-starvers and the Ribbon-chaplains are extended, as they reasonably expect, the end will merely come a little quicker for Ireland. The kinsmen of the noble

bishops will crow on parochial eminences from the pious pubs of Annagry to the pious pubs of Waterford.

Imagine asking English citizens to confer on Clerical Committees in England the uncontrolled distribution* of public taxation! Yet it is reasonably expected that they will again confer it upon Sacerdotal Committees in Ireland. So fond is English confidence in the Irish cleric. So deep is English contempt for the Irish layman.

Perhaps there is a profound reason for these British views. I do not enter into that consideration. My protest raises no question of Nationalism in politics. The most extreme Nationalist might admit that foreign government need not necessarily produce what we see in Ireland. The most extreme Unionist does not claim that Ireland is a credit to any of his convictions. But I am entitled, in face of all the facts, to blame and denounce to public and human indignation the moral and material debasement, the ruin perhaps beyond redemption, of a gifted, a kindly, a generous race and population; and I have the right to lay the responsibility where it should be laid. It has been the secular policy of the British Government in Ireland to trust to the Secret Service of the Sacristry instead of any nobler or safer auxiliary.

* It is precisely the total absence of control over the expenditure of the Parish Priest Committees which makes them so dear and sacrosanct to the clerical managers. "The favourites of the priest can get grants five times over," as we have already heard. The Priest is often the Committee. How can the Board control him? A witness before the Commission, Rev. Mr. Orr, rector of Maghery, in Donegal, plainly stated this fact. "The Central Board would have to get their information through the Parish Committee. They would have no means of getting their information except through the Parish Committee or the Parish Priest." Of course. It is mere impudence to pretend anything else. When you have Unrepresentative Clerical Management you cannot have Representative Lay Control. If the lay taxpayer is to rule the Board, you must send the political priest to his Sanctuary, and keep him there.

And it has not scrupled to pay the price of that loathsome co-operation. Between Whitehall and the Propaganda, between the Castle and Maynooth, the bargain has been hatched and the hire has been accorded.

The Irish laity were given over to the cleric to despoil and to dominate. Six thousand blackholes of the intelligence stunted and deformed the education of the common people. The edifices of united learning, the dream of every patriot, were starved and betrayed at the pretext of an empty excommunication. England abandoned property to the organiser of anarchism and liberty to the organiser of oppression, and the name for both is the Political Priest. Though the country is starving, his war chest is always full. He has the patronage of everything, from the Judicial Bench to the Gombeen Magistrates. He has the selection of Royal Commissions. He has the simony of the sacraments. His toll is extorted from the joys and the sorrows of humanity. He fleeces the humble dowry of village brides, the frightened incoherence of the death-bed, the grief of the widow and the orphan. His collecting plates are reinforced by the plunder of the schools and the doles of the taxpayer. He has his hand on the throttle valve of intimidation. If he call off his cowbeaters a grateful Cabinet will give him a Clerical University. When the croziers are safely entrenched in the sectarian endowment, the whistle of the hazels can startle anew the lowing herds of Roscommon and Meath.

This is what the English call the rule of a governing race, an imperial people. It was English law in 1829 which disfranchised the small tenantry who were usually well-disposed to the landlords. It was English law in 1846 which beggared Irish agriculture with alien imports, drove the farmer to emigration, and the owner into bankruptcy. It was English law which set the political priests to make the popular

education a school of ignorance and dirt. It was English law which first starved and then destroyed the popular university. It was English law which made under-cultivation the only road to the favours of the land court. It was English law which established the Congested Districts Board as the preserve and the treasury of a priest-led anarchy. It was English law which made the fuglemen of the Ribbon Order a Commission of Inquiry into their own proceedings and a Commission of Propaganda for their own designs.

Undoubtedly the meanest thing which English faction has done in Ireland has been to throw to the wolves of the political priesthood the property, the very existence, of that great and distinguished class of Irishmen, who had been so loyal to England in evil days, who had been so devoted and useful to Ireland until they allowed the malice of sacerdotal conspirators to drive a widening gulf between them and their countrymen. So long as the stately architecture of the Custom House stands by Dublin quay, so long as the patrician grace of the Parliament House neighbours the studious front of Trinity, so long must Irishmen, who know their country's history, mourn the lost opportunities of the Protestant Irish, opportunities which were not so much lost as ruined.

But of all that England has done or misdone in Ireland, the worst beyond all comparison—at least, in the later age—has been her patronage and utilisation of what is worst in the grosser part of the popular Church in that unhappy country. The compact by which England placed her Irish administration at the service of Maynooth, and Maynooth its priestly police at the service of Dublin Castle, is one of the most stupid as well as most base on record. The State might keep faith in such an arrangement, but all history is the witness that the Churchmen would only keep it “under reservation.” They might condemn a French invasion, when France had shut the

churches. They might denounce a Fenian raid, for a Fenian maxim was, No priests in politics. That salved the delicacy of their conscience in the blacker treason of sapping the foundations of civil welfare and organising from ten thousand pulpits and platforms the social war. From the cursing curates who terrorised the voters of Vesey Fitzgerald at the Clare election to the Ribbon chaplains and prelates of our days, what a procession!

To make sure of the devotion of the Irish priests, the Bismarks of Downing Street had gone to the Vatican, and the Vatican had been most obliging. "Have no fear! We will abolish canonical rights in Ireland. We will make Ireland a province of Propaganda. Then you can be always sure of the nomination of the right sort to the Irish bishoprics." The diplomatic genius of England gurgled its gratitude. The Irish difficulty was solved.

The device of placing the canonical church of an ancient Christianity under the Foreign Missions Board at Rome, like a nigger kraal or a coolie compound, was about equally discreditable from the civil and the religious standpoint. It placed the entire priesthood, the entire episcopate of the nation in the hands of unknown foreigners, on a promise to uphold the British Empire! It placed every Irish parish and diocese in the control and disposal of total strangers, who were alike alien to the temporal progress of the country and ignorant of what that progress might require. Ireland, which boasted with historic truth that she had sent missionaries of culture and religion to the half of Europe when anarchy and ignorance occupied the precincts of the Lateran, was henceforth to be even as Congoland or Manchuria. A Foreign Missions Board, which was only created in the seventeenth century, was to be the absolute master of the discrowned Church which had called on Christ in the middle of the fifth. Poor masquerading dictators of

the Hibernian Sees, who are themselves only pawns in the hands of veiled figures of players somewhere by the banks of an Italian river!

“Neither clergy nor laity possess any rights in a mission country.” Is the British Government proud of its handiwork? Is it satisfied with the results? When Mr. Bryce or Mr. Birrell scurries round from archbishop to cardinal and back again, and fancies that he is “consulting Irish ecclesiastical opinion,” he is only consulting dignified dolls, whose mechanism reels off a phonograph record, set by ingenious Fathers General and Superior who never saw Ireland, except perhaps to inaugurate a congestion cathedral. And woe to the Irish priests who dare to think of Ireland first! By scores and hundreds they have been chased beyond the Channel, beyond the Atlantic. Their successors have learned to be thoroughly tame. It is the peculiar cruelty and cowardice of British policy in Ireland to have laid this yoke upon totally defenceless people. If we could forget the misery, the desperation, the degradation, we might be satisfied to add that English policy has got its reward. The ruin of the gentry, the flight of the population, the savagery of discontent! Are not these encouraging reasons for continuing so productive a method and treatment? Like a parody of old-time clans, the slogan of Castle Universities and Congestion Boards is “The Dead Hand for ever!” Not unmindful of that policy here were a grant of arms for the promised seminary-in-disguise:—A shield *vert* quartered with fasces of hazel rods and gags and blinkers all proper; with a chief of *gules* bearing a mask *sable* for the Secret Sectarian Order; over all an escutcheon of pretence emblazoned with a book *chained and padlocked* supporting the Mitres of the Board.



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